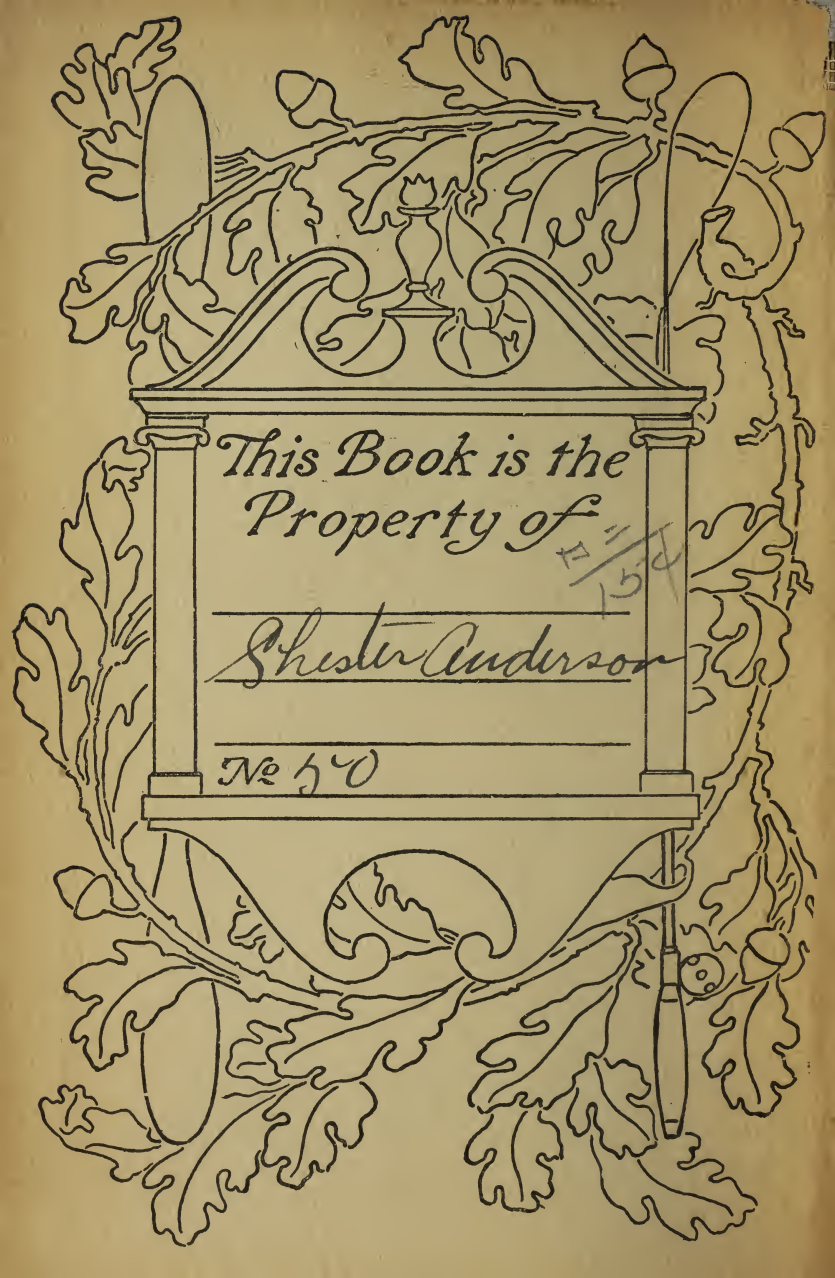




FACING THE WORLD

HORATIO ALGER, JR.



*This Book is the
Property of*

Shester Anderson

No 50

The person charging this material is responsible for its return to the library from which it was withdrawn on or before the **Latest Date** stamped below.

Theft, mutilation, and underlining of books are reasons for disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the University.

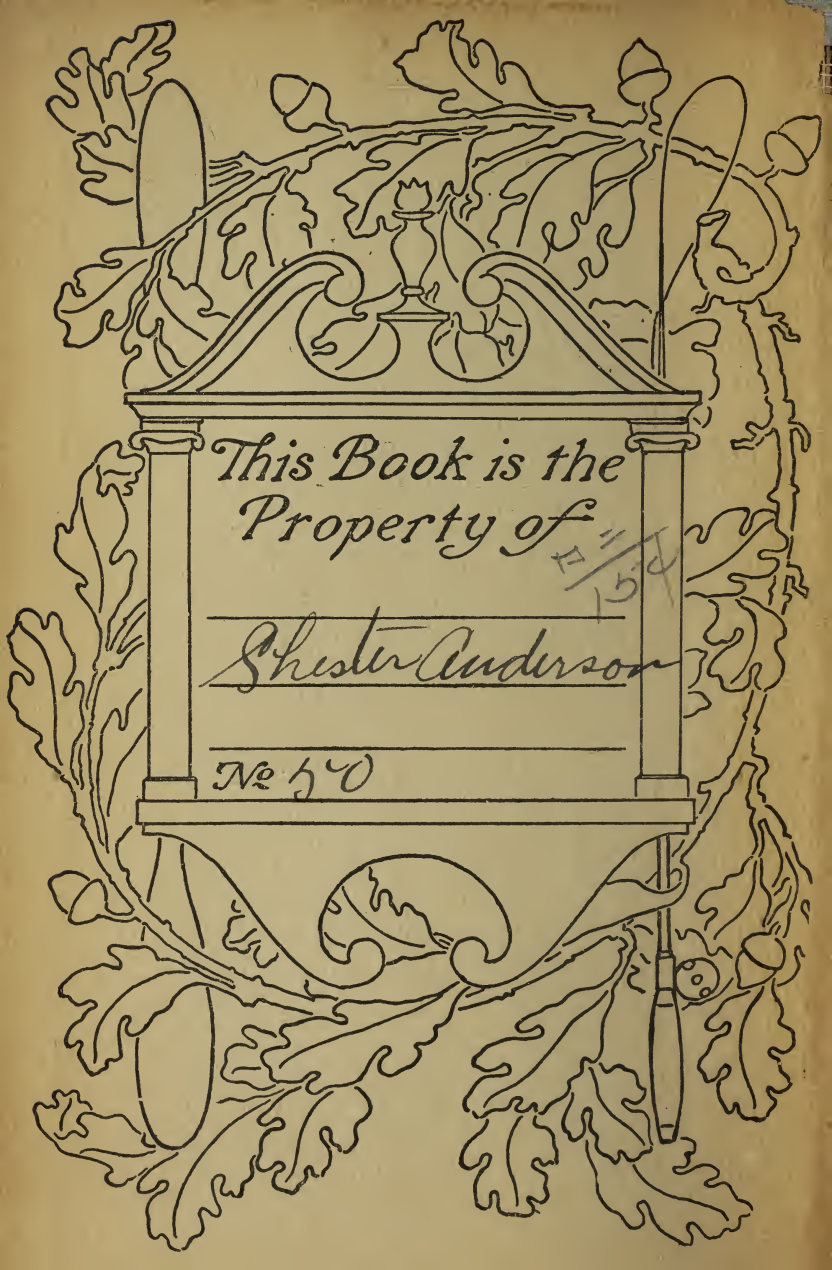
To renew call Telephone Center, 333-8400

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

SEP 29 1981

JAN 03 1983

L161—O-1096



*This Book is the
Property of*

Phoebe Anderson

No 50



THE BEST OF THE Famous Alger Stories for Boys

A new edition, five by seven inches, from new plates, with new illustrations. Bound in cloth, and stamped in colors on the front cover in several designs.

DISTINCTIVELY GOOD LOOKING VOLUMES.
THE LOWEST PRICED CLOTH BOUND EDITION AND BETTER IN MANY WAYS THAN SOME OF THE HIGHER PRICED EDITIONS

More ALGER BOOKS are sold and they are more popular than any other line of Boys' Books.

ALGER stands on the boy's level, appeals to his heart, and what his heroes suggest or achieve is in the line of advancement to high standards.

ALGER'S BOOKS go to the right spot every time. His characters are living boys who do things.

ALGER could look on life as boys do, and entered into their plans, hopes, and aspirations as they do.

The episodes are graphic, exciting, realistic. The tendency of ALGER stories is to the formation of an honorable, manly character. They convey lessons of pluck, perseverance, and independence.

Their high moral character, clean, manly tone, and the wholesome lessons they teach without being *goody-goody*, make ALGER BOOKS as acceptable to the parents as to the boys.

THE NEW YORK BOOK COMPANY

147 FOURTH AVENUE - - - - - NEW YORK, N. Y.



"Harry Vane, the young vocalist, charmed both
old and young."

FACING THE WORLD

OR

THE HAPS AND MISHAPS OF HARRY VANE

BY

HORATIO ALGER, JR.

AUTHOR OF

"ONLY AN IRISH BOY," "THE CASH BOY," "MAKING HIS WAY,"
"STRONG AND STEADY," "TRY AND TRUST," "BOUND TO RISE,"
"TONY THE TRAMP," "JOE'S LUCK," "DO AND DARE,"
"JULIUS THE STREET BOY," ETC.



NEW YORK

THE NEW YORK BOOK COMPANY

1909

813
AL3f

FACING THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

HARRY RECEIVES A LETTER

"HERE'S a letter for you, Harry," said George Howard.

"Thank you, Georgie. Where did you get it?"

"I was passing the hotel on my way home from school when Abner Potts called out to me from the piazza, and asked me to bring it to you."

The speaker was a bright, round-faced boy of ten. The boy whom he addressed was five or six years older. He had a pleasant face, but it was a strong face, also, and there was an air of firmness and resolution which indicated that he was a boy who knew his rights, and knowing, dared maintain. He was grave, too, but this was not his ordinary expression. He had special reason to look sober, for only a week previous he had lost his father, and as the family consisted only of these two, he was left, so far as near relatives were concerned, alone in the world.

Immediately after the funeral he had been invited home by Mr. Benjamin Howard, a friend of his father, but in no manner connected with him by ties of relationship.

"You can stay here as long as you like, Harry," said Mr. Howard kindly. "It will take you some time to form your plans, perhaps, and Georgie will be glad to have your company."

"Thank you, Mr. Howard," said Harry gratefully. "There is no place that will seem so much like home

to me, but I am old enough to work at some business directly."

"Shall you look for some employment here?"

"No, my father has a second cousin in Colebrook, named John Fox. Before he died he advised me to write to Mr. Fox, and go to his house if I should receive an invitation."

"Do you know anything of this John Fox?"

"No; he and my father had not met for many years—in fact, since they were both boys. I believe there had been no communication between them in all that time. He is a prosperous man, I hear, and my father thought he would be a suitable guardian."

"Where does he live?"

"In Colebrook."

"That is a hundred miles away," said Mr. Howard, thoughtfully.

"So father told me."

"Have you written to Mr. Fox?"

"I shall write to-night."

"Have you any idea how your father was situated as regards property?" asked Mr. Howard, watching Harry's face with sympathetic interest.

"I am afraid there is very little property."

"You are right there. Your father had in my hands—he placed it with me for safe keeping—three hundred dollars. Then there is the furniture, which it will be best to sell. I suppose it will hardly bring more than enough to defray the funeral expenses."

"I expected that, sir."

"So that you inherit but three hundred dollars clear."

"It is enough, sir, with my good health and strong arms," answered Harry calmly.

"You are not afraid, then, to begin the world on this small provision?"

"No, sir," said Harry, with calm confidence.

"Well, I applaud your courage, Harry. I think, myself, that you will get along."

"I ought to say that there is one item of property besides, Mr. Howard."

"What is that?"

"Fifty shares in a Lake Superior copper mine."

"Indeed! I had not heard of it," said Mr. Howard, showing surprise.

"My father gave them to me before he died, saying that they were probably worthless, and not worth handing over to my guardian. He advised me to keep them myself, and if ever they amounted to anything, to sell them."

"How long has he owned them?"

"Some years, I think. He was on a visit to the Western country when he was induced to buy them. I don't think the mine is worked now."

"Still, there is no knowing what may come of it. You had better take good care of the shares."

"I should like to leave them with you, Mr. Howard. I don't care to hand them to Mr. Fox."

"Just as you please, Harry. Is Mr. Fox your only relative?" he continued.

"There may be an exception," said Harry. "An uncle of mine disappeared fifteen years ago. He was a seafaring man, and, when last heard from, was the mate of a merchant vessel. The vessel was lost, and I suppose he was lost with it, but we never could find out. You know my father was an Englishman?"

"Yes, I know that."

"And my uncle had never been in America, unless he touched here on some voyage. Father came to this country when he was twenty-five, and married here."

"So you are American born, Harry?"

"I consider myself an American," said the boy, proudly. "Besides, my mother was an American."

"And this Mr. Fox—is he English?"

"He was born in Liverpool, but was brought here when he was about the age of Georgie."

"I hope, for your sake, he will prove a good man. What is his business?"

"I don't know, nor did my father. [All I know is, that he is considered a prosperous man."

We have kept the reader waiting for some time in ignorance of the contents of Harry's letter. The delay, however, has enabled us to understand it better. It was inclosed in a brown envelope, and ran as follows:

"HARRY VANE: I have received your letter, saying that your father wants me to be your gardeen. I don't know as I have any objections, bein' a business man it will come easy to me, and I think your father was wise to select me. I am reddy to receive you any time. You will come to Bolton on the cars. That is eight miles from here, and there is a stage that meats the trane. It wouldn't do you any harm to walk, but boys ain't so active as they were in my young days. The stage fare is fifty cents, which I shall expect you to pay yourself, if you ride.

"There is one thing you don't say anything about—how much property your pa left. I hope it is a good round sum, and I will take good care of it for you. Ennybody round here will tell you that John Fox is a good man of business, and about as sharp as most people. Mrs. Fox will be glad to see you, and my boy, Joel, will be glad to have some one to keep him kompany. He is about sixteen years old. You don't say how old you are, but from your letter I surmise that you are as much as that. You will find a happy united famerly, consistin' of me and my wife, Joel and his sister, Sally. Sally is fourteen, just two years younger than Joel. We live in a comfor'able way, but we don't gorge ourselves on rich, unhelthy food. No more at present. Yours to command,

"JOHN FOX."

Harry smiled more than once as he read this letter. When Mr. Howard came in, he handed it to him.

"Your relative isn't strong on spelling," remarked Mr. Howard, as he laid the letter on the table.

"No, sir; but he appears to be strong on economy. It is a comfort to know that I shall not be injured by 'rich, unhealthy food.'"

"Do you think, from the letter, that you are likely to get on well with this man?" asked his friend, with a shade of anxiety.

"I don't think I shall," answered Harry, quietly. "He must be a great contrast to my dear father."

"Undoubtedly. Your father was a man of education and refinement, and it is easy to see that this man has neither."

"I will give him a fair trial, Mr. Howard. I won't allow myself to be prejudiced in advance."

"That is right. When do you mean to start for Colebrook?"

"To-morrow morning. I have been looking at a railroad guide, and I find it will bring me to Colebrook in time for supper."

"We should be glad to have you stay with us as long as possible, Harry."

"Thank you, Mr. Howard, I don't doubt that, but the struggle of life is before me, and I may as well enter upon it at once."

CHAPTER II

THE STAGECOACH

At four o'clock in the afternoon the conductor of the train on which Harry was a passenger called out Bolton.

Harry snatched up his carpetbag, and made his way to the door, for this was the place where he was to take the stage for Colebrook.

Two other passengers got out at the same time. One was an elderly man, the other a young man of twenty-five. They appeared to be father and son, and, as Harry learned afterward, they were engaged in farming.

"Any passengers for Colebrook?" inquired the driver of an old-fashioned Concord stage, which was drawn up beside the platform.

"There's Obed and me," said the old farmer. "I guess we'd rather ride than foot it, though seventy-five cents is pretty steep just for gittin' over the ground."

"'Tain't so steep as the hills between here and Colebrook," said the driver, chuckling. "Still, ef you'd rather walk——"

"I'm too old to walk; but when I was Obed's age I wouldn't have minded it."

"But I do," said Obed. "Time is more valuable than it was in your time, dad."

"That's the way with the young folks—they are all for spending."

Harry judged, from the old farmer's appearance that he was not in the habit of spending much for dress. His son was better attired.

"May I ride on the seat with you?" asked Harry, of the driver.

"Sartain. Where are you going?"

"To Colebrook."

"Then this is your team."

Harry climbed up with a boy's activity, and sat down on the broad seat, congratulating himself that he would have a chance to see the country and breathe better air than those confined inside.

"Jest hold onto the reins, while I ship some freight for the grocery store," said the driver.

This Harry was perfectly willing to do, having a liking for horses.

Soon the driver sat down on the box beside him, and started the horses.

"You're a stranger, ain't you?" he remarked, with an inquisitive glance at his young traveling companion.

"Yes; I've never been here before."

"Where do you come from?"

"From Ferguson."

"Never heard of the place. Where is it?"

"About ninety miles west of here."

"Sho! Do you intend to stay long in Colebrook?"

"I don't know. It will depend on how I like it."

"Are you a peddler, or traveling salesman, or anything of that sort?"

"No," answered Harry, smiling. "I may be sometime, but I am afraid I'm too young to get such a place."

"Well, you do look young. I've got a boy nigh about as old as you look."

"I am sixteen."

"I reckoned about that. Are you goin' to the tavern?"

"No; I'm going to the house of Mr. John Fox. Do you know him?"

"Well, I should smile. I reckon everybody round here knows John Fox."

"I don't know him. I never saw him in my life."

"Are you goin' to board with him?"

"Very likely. He is to be my guardian."

"Sho! You'll have a queer guardian. That's all I say."

"Why queer?"

"The fact is, old John'll cheat you out of your eye teeth ef he gets a chance. He's about the sharpest man round."

"He can't cheat me out of much," returned Harry, not especially reassured by this remark. "What is the business of Mr. Fox?"

"Well, he's got some land, but he makes his livin' chiefly by tradin' hosses, auctioneerin', and such like."

"I suppose he is well off?"

"Well, the old man is pretty forehanded. He's allus gettin' money in one way or another, and he don't cal'late to spend much. They do say he sets about as mean a table as any in Colebrook."

"That isn't very encouraging," said Harry, "if I'm to live there."

"How in thunder d'you come to app'int him your guardeen?"

"My father died recently, and Mr. Fox is about the only relation he has in America."

"Your father didn't know much about old John, I reckon?"

"He knew nothing about him, except that he lived in Colebrook, and was pretty well off. What sort of a woman is Mrs. Fox?"

"She's a good match for the old man. She's about as mean as he is. Once a year the Sewin' Circle meets there, and my wife says—she's a member, you know—that of all the dough pies and cake that she ever ate, Mrs. Fox's will take the premium."

"Mr. Fox wrote me that he had two children."

"Yes, there's Joel—he's about your age. He's a chip of the old block, red-headed and freckled, just like the old man. I don't believe Joel ever spent a cent in his life."

He hangs on to money as tight as ef his life depended on't."

"I am afraid he won't prove a very agreeable companion, then."

"Ain't a very pop'lar boy, that's a fact. He swapped jackknives with my boy last week. I told Jim he'd be took in, and he was. It's hard to git ahead of Joel."

"There's a girl, too, isn't there?"

"Yes, Sally."

"Is she pretty?"

"She looks like her ma, except that she's red-headed like her pa. She's pretty smart to work, but she's as homely as they make 'em."

"I'm glad to know something of the family, but I'm afraid I shan't enjoy myself very much among the Foxes."

"You ain't used to livin' with foxes, then?" said the driver, with a grin.

"No, nor with people like them. By the way, who are the two other passengers?"

"Elias Jones and his son, Obed. 'Lias is a farmer, and pretty well off. He's got a good farm, and a few thousand dollars in bank stock. Obed's got a farm, too."

"Are they anything like my friends, the Foxes?"

"No; they're a good sight better. Old 'Lias don't spend money foolishly—he's a careful man—but he isn't mean. Folks in his house have plenty to eat, and good, wholesome food, too. Then he's always willin' to pay his share for the church and other purposes."

"He thought seventy-five cents rather high stage fare?"

"That's only his joke. He'd rather pay a dollar and a half than walk."

"Mr. Fox wrote me that he thought it wouldn't do me any harm to walk from Bolton to Colebrook, and save the stage fare."

"Jest like old John. He grudges me my livin'."

"Does he ever ride with you himself?"

"He always has a horse of his own. If he hadn't he'd walk."

"I think I've got my money's worth in information," said Harry, smiling. "I'm glad I rode on the box."

"You're welcome to all I can tell you. I'm sorry you're going to live with John Fox, though."

"So am I, after what you have told me. As it was my father's wish, I shall give him a trial, but I shan't stay long if I don't like him."

"You'll soon get tired of your new home, I reckon."

With such conversation Harry beguiled the way. On the whole, he enjoyed the ride. There were hills, and here and there the road ran through the woods. He could hear the singing of birds, and, notwithstanding what he had heard, he felt in good spirits. There are times when the young, buoyed by hope, fancy it is easy to conquer the world. The future looks rose-colored, and success seems certain. Harry was in such a mood. He was coming to an uncongenial home and among sordid, mean people, but he did not care for that.

"I shan't have to live with them any longer than I like," he said to himself.

It is well that youth is so hopeful and sanguine. There are trials and difficulties enough in store in most cases. Hope and courage make them easier to meet, and easier to overcome.

At length the stage entered the village of Colebrook. It was a village of moderate size—about two hundred houses being scattered over a tract half a mile square. Occupying a central position was the tavern, a square, two-story building, with a piazza in front, on which was congregated a number of villagers. After rapidly scanning them, the driver said:

"Do you see that tall man leanin' against a post?"

"Yes."

“That’s your guardeen! That’s John Fox himself, as large as life, and just about as homely.”

CHAPTER III

THE DANGER SIGNAL

THE man pointed out to Harry as his guardian was tall, loosely put together, with a sharp, thin visage surrounded by a thicket of dull-red hair. He came forward, as Harry jumped to the ground after descending from his elevated perch, and said: “I reckon this is Harry Vane?”

“That is my name, sir.”

“Glad to see you. Just take your traps, and come along with me. Mis’ Fox will have supper ready by the time we come.”

Harry was not, on the whole, attracted by the appearance of his guardian. There was a crafty look about the eyes of Mr. Fox, which seemed to make his name appropriate. He surveyed his young ward critically.

“You’re pretty well grown,” he said.

“Yes, sir.”

“And look stout and strong.”

“I believe I am both.”

“My boy, Joel, is as tall as you, but not so hefty.”

“How old is he, Mr. Fox?”

“Close on to sixteen.”

“So am I.”

“He’s goin’ to be tall, like me. He’s a sharp boy—Joel.”

“Perhaps he has an advantage of me in that,” said Harry, smiling.

“You look sharp enough.”

“Thank you.”

"I guess you can wrastle round and make a livin'."

"I hope so."

"By the way, you didn't write how much property your father left."

"No, I didn't think of it."

"It's really important, though, as your guardian I ought to know."

"After the funeral bills are paid, I presume there'll be about three hundred dollars."

Mr. Fox stopped short and whistled.

"Sho!" he exclaimed; "is that all?"

"There may be a few dollars more."

"Well, well," said John Fox, in evident disappointment, "I thought there'd be a good deal more—maybe three thousand dollars."

"Father hadn't much talent at making money," said Harry soberly.

"I should say not. Why, that money won't last you no time at all."

"I mean to make it last a good while, Mr. Fox."

"How?"

"I am old enough to work for a living. Isn't there something I can find to do in Colebrook?"

"We'll think of that," said John Fox, surveying Harry's strongly knit, though boyish, form thoughtfully. "Have you been used to horses?"

"Father didn't own any horses, but a neighbor of ours did, and I've taken care of them a week at a time when his son was away."

"That's good. Boys ought to know about horses. We had a city boy down here last summer who was afraid of horses. He didn't dare to go into the stall with them."

"I don't think you'll find me afraid of horses. Do you keep any?"

"I mostly have two or three on hand. I do considerable tradin' in horses."

"Does your son like horses?"

"Well, middlin'. He's used to drivin' 'em. He ain't got such a fancy for 'em as I have. I tell you what, Harry—that's your name, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir."

"I guess I can give you work myself. There's always more or less to do round a place. I keep a man part of the time, but, I reckon I can let him go and take you on instead. You see, that will count on your board, and you don't want to spend your money too fast."

"How much are you willing to pay me, Mr. Fox?"

"We'll settle that after a week, when I see how well you work," replied Mr. Fox cautiously.

"Very well, sir. There's only one thing I will stipulate; I will wait a day or two before going to work. I want to look about the place a little."

"Just as you say, but I'd like to get you started as soon as possible."

While this conversation was going on, they had traversed a considerable distance. A little distance ahead appeared a square house, painted yellow, with a barn a little back on the left, and two old wagons alongside.

"That's my house," said John Fox.

"Is it?"

"Yes, it was the old Payson place. I had a mortgage on it which old Caleb Payson couldn't pay, so I took possession six years ago."

"And what became of the former owner?"

"Old Caleb? He died in the poorhouse last year."

"That was a sad fate."

"Well, he had enough to eat, and didn't want for nothin'. I made a pretty good bargain, for the place was worth thirty per cent more than the face of the mortgage. Still, as there was nobody wanted it enough to bid more, I got it for the face of the mortgage. There's twenty acres belongs to it."

"It seems as if Mr. Payson ought to have received the full value of the place," said Harry, thinking with pity of the old man who had to leave his home and live on the town.

"That's a very unpractical remark, Harry Vane," said John Fox, somewhat contemptuously. "It shows you ain't used to business. But here's Joel."

"Joel, a tall boy in figure, like his father, here came forward and eyed Harry with sharp curiosity.

"How are ye?" said Joel, extending a red hand, covered with warts.

"Pretty well, thank you," said Harry, not much attracted to his new acquaintance.

"Here's Sally, too!" said John Fox. "Sally, this is my ward, Harry Vane."

Sally, who bore a striking family resemblance to her father and brother, giggled.

"Don't be bashful, Sally. Shake hands with the boy!"

Sally extended her hand shyly, and giggled again.

"I leave you young folks to get acquainted, and will go into the house, and see if your mother has got supper ready."

"Ain't he nice lookin'," said Sally, in an audible aside to Joel.

Harry heard the remark and felt uncomfortable. It was flattering, but compliments from a girl like Sally Fox didn't seem to affect him.

The three young people got better acquainted within the next fifteen minutes, when they were called to supper, but I have a special reason for postponing any immediate account of their conference. Mrs. Fox, to whom Harry was introduced at the supper table, was as peculiar in her appearance, and as destitute of beauty as the rest of the family. She was prepared to be very attentive to Harry, but, having learned from her husband the moderate

amount of his fortune, thought it hardly worth while to be more than coldly civil.

* * * *

The next day, Harry, feeling, it must be confessed, rather homesick, declined Joel's company, and took an extended stroll about the town. He found that though the railway by which he had come was eight miles distant, there was another, passing within a mile of the village. He struck upon it, and before proceeding far made a startling discovery. There had been some heavy rains, which had washed out the road for a considerable distance, causing the track to give way.

"Good Heavens!" thought Harry, "if a train comes over the road before this is mended, there'll be a wreck and loss of life. What can I do?"

Just across a field stood a small house. In the yard the week's washing was hung out. Among the articles was a red tablecloth.

"May I borrow that tablecloth?" asked Harry, in excitement, of a woman in the doorway.

"Land sakes! what for?" she asked.

"To signal the train. The road's washed away."

"Yes, yes; I'm expectin' my darter on that train," answered the woman, now as excited as our hero. "Hurry up! the train's due in fifteen minutes."

Seizing the tablecloth, Harry ran back to the railroad. He hurried down the track west of a curve which was a few hundred feet beyond the washout, and saw the train coming at full speed.

He jumped on a fence skirting the tracks, and waved the tablecloth wildly.

"Will they see it?" he asked himself anxiously.

CHAPTER IV

A GOOD MORNING'S WORK

It was an anxious moment for Harry as he stood waving the danger signal, uncertain whether it would attract the attention of the engineer. It did! The engineer, though not understanding the meaning of the signal, not knowing, indeed, but it might be a boy's freak, prudently heeded it, and reversing the engine, stopped the train within a short distance of the place of danger.

"Thank God!" exclaimed Harry, breathing a deep sigh of relief.

The engineer alighted from the train, and, when he looked ahead, needed no explanation.

"My boy!" he said with a shudder, "you have saved the train."

"I am glad of it, sir. My heart was in my mouth, lest you should not see my signal."

By this time the passengers, whose curiosity had been roused by the sudden halt, began to pour out of the cars.

When they saw the washout, strong men turned pale, and ladies grew faint, while many a fervent ejaculation of gratitude was heard at the wonderful escape.

"We owe our lives to this boy!" said the engineer. "It was he who stood on the fence and signaled me. We owe our deliverance to this—tablecloth."

One impressible lady, who had two young children with her, threw her arms round Harry's neck, and kissed him, much to our hero's embarrassment, while half a dozen gentlemen shook hands with him.

A small man, somewhat portly, pushed his way up to Harry.

"What's your name, my lad?" he asked brusquely.

"Harry Vane."

"Where do you live?"

"In Colebrook—at present."

"When did you discover this washout?"

"Not over ten minutes since."

"And where did you get your signal?"

"In the yard of yonder house, sir."

"You have shown wonderful promptness and presence of mind. Probably you don't know me."

"No, sir."

"I am the president and leading stockholder of the road, and my property has come very near being the death of me. Gentlemen"—here the president turned to the group of gentlemen around him—"don't you think this boy deserves a testimonial?"

"Yes, yes!" returned the gentlemen, in chorus.

"So do I, and I lead off with a subscription of twenty dollars."

"Here's another twenty!"

"And here's ten!"

"Here's five!"

So one after another followed the president's lead, the president himself making the rounds bareheaded, and gathering the contributions in his hat.

"Oh, sir!" said Harry, as soon as he understood what was going forward, "don't reward me for what was only my duty. I should be ashamed to accept anything for the little I have done."

"You may count it little to save the lives of a train full of people," said the president dryly, "but we set a slight value upon our lives and limbs. Are you rich?"

"No, sir."

"So I thought. Well, you needn't be ashamed to accept a little testimonial of our gratitude."

"Let me do my share," said a young lady, as she dropped a bill into the hat.

"Certainly, miss. The ladies are by no means to be slighted."

When all so disposed had contributed, the president handed the pile of bills to Harry.

"Take them, my boy," he said, "and make good use of them. I shall owe you a considerable balance, for I value my life at more than twenty dollars. Here is my card. If you ever need a friend, or a service, call on me."

Then the president gave directions to the engineer to run back to the preceding station, where there was a telegraph office, from which messages could be sent in both directions to warn trains of the washout.

Though it has taken me considerable time to narrate this incident, the time consumed was very brief, and Harry was left with his hands full of money, hardly knowing whether he was awake or dreaming.

One thing seemed to him only fair—to give the owner of the tablecloth some small share of the money, as an acknowledgment for the use of her property.

"Here, madam," said Harry, when he had retraced his steps to the house, "is your tablecloth, for which I am much obliged. It saved the train."

"Well, I'm thankful! Little did I ever think a tablecloth would do so much good. Why, it only cost me a dollar and a quarter."

"Allow me to ask your acceptance of this bill to pay you for the use of it."

"Land sakes! why, you've given me ten dollars!"

"It's all right. It came from the passengers. They gave me something, too."

"How much did they give you?"

"I don't know yet," answered Harry, thinking it unwise to gratify the curiosity of the good lady.

"Did they say this money was for me?" she asked.

"No; but I am sure they would think you ought to have it."

"Well, I'm sure I'm very much obleeged. Ten dollars! Why, I haven't hed so much money in a long time."

"You can buy a new tablecloth."

"No, I won't; the old one will do. I'll buy me a shawl to wear Sundays. I haven't had one since I was married. You didn't tell me your name."

"My name is Harry Vane."

"Do you live round here? I never heerd the name afore."

"I've just come to the village. I'm going to live with John Fox."

"You don't say! Be you any kin to Fox?"

"Not very near. He's my guardian."

"Sho! you don't say. Well, I hope you'll like him."

She spoke in rather a dubious tone. Harry smiled. He had already made up his mind on that subject, but did not care to take a stranger into his confidence.

"I hope so," he said.

"If he hears you've had any money give you, he'll want to take care of it for you."

This consideration had not occurred to Harry. Indeed, he had for so short a time been the possessor of the money, of which he did not know the amount, that this was not surprising.

"Well, good-morning!" he said.

"Good-mornin'! It's been a lucky mornin' for both of us. Hadn't you better see how much money you've got?"

"Not now. I'm in a hurry."

Indeed, Harry had some curiosity on the subject himself. He was not quite sure whether he ought to have accepted money for the service he had rendered, but then the president of the road thought it right, and our hero felt in his own case that he would have liked to do something for a person who had saved his life. So he quieted his scruples, and determined to accept thankfully what had been showered upon him.

"I must go somewhere where I can count this money unobserved," he said to himself.

Not far away he saw a ruined shed. Near it were the charred remains of a house that had been consumed. The shed had not been much injured.

Harry entered the shed, and sitting down on a log, took out the bills, which he had hurriedly stuffed in his pocket, and began to count them.

It is not necessary to detail the counting. The sum total is what we want to find out. It was large enough to amaze and gratify him. Though a majority of the bills were small, there were many of them, and the aggregate sum was two hundred and eighty-nine dollars and fifty cents.

The fifty cents had been dropped into the hat by a child.

Had Harry retained the ten dollars given to the owner of the tablecloth, he would have within fifty cents of three hundred dollars.

CHAPTER V

HARRY'S SAVINGS BANK

"ALMOST three hundred dollars!" murmured Harry, joyously. "It has been, indeed, a lucky morning for me. It has nearly doubled my property."

The question arose in his mind: "Should he give this money to Mr. Fox to keep for him?"

Had his guardian been a man like Mr. Howard, he would have had no hesitation in giving this windfall into his hands. But he had formed a poor opinion of John Fox, apart from the unfavorable accounts he had heard of him, and was beginning to be sorry he had come into his charge.

"No," he decided, "I won't give him this money. I

won't even let him know I have it." Where, then, could he conceal it? He could not very well carry it about with him all the time. Moreover, it would be dangerous. If he could put it in a savings bank, that might answer, but should Mr. Fox learn that he had a deposit anywhere, he might, as guardian, have power to claim it. On the whole, Harry felt puzzled to know what to do with his suddenly acquired wealth.

"I wish I had asked the president of the road to take care of the money for me," thought Harry. "It would have been safe in his hands."

Still undecided, our hero walked over to the ruined house, and began to look about him. In one corner, he noticed a little, leather-covered, black trunk, not more than a foot long, and six inches deep, which was apparently uninjured, having been thrown out of a window. It was locked, but a small key was in the lock.

An idea struck him. He would convert this miniature trunk into a cash box, and deposit his wealth therein. He could no doubt conceal it somewhere afterwards.

Opening the trunk he found it empty. The lock seemed in good condition. He made a pile of the bills, and depositing them in this receptacle, locked the trunk and put the key in his pocket.

Now for a place of concealment.

Harry came out of the shed, and looked scrutinizingly around him. Not far away was a sharp elevation surmounted by trees. Without any definite idea, Harry, box in hand, ascended the elevation, and from the top had an extended view of the neighborhood. This, however, was not what he wanted. The hill was of a gravelly formation, and therefore dry. At one point near a withered tree, our hero detected a cavity, made either by accident or design. Its location near the tree made it easy to discover.

"Why not hide the trunk here?" he said to himself.

The more he thought of it, the more he liked the idea.

It might not be a good permanent hiding place, but it would do till he had time to think of another.

With a little labor he enlarged and deepened the hole, till he could easily store away the box in its recess, then covered it up carefully, and strewed grass and leaves over all to hide the traces of excavation.

"There, that will do," he said, in a tone of satisfaction. "Let Mr. Fox find it if he can."

He had reserved for possible need fifteen dollars in small bills, which he put into his pocketbook. He had been reduced to a single dollar after defraying the expenses of his journey, but now he felt quite in funds. Having no further business on the hillock, he descended to the railway, and took his way homeward, without passing the scene of the washout.

Had he done so he would have found his respected guardian with his son, Joel, and quite a large number of the village people on the spot, looking curiously about them.

John Fox had heard the news in the post office, and had started off at once for the scene of danger. He had a keen scent for possible advantage, and not being sure when he started but there had really been a smash-up—such was the erroneous report that had come to the village—thought it possible that he might discover something thrown away by terrified passengers that would be of use to him. I am not prepared to say that he was disappointed to find that the danger had been averted, but he was, at any rate, sorry that he was not likely to be repaid for his journey.

"How'd they hear of the washout?" he asked, puzzled.

"I heerd that a boy discovered it, and signaled the train," said his neighbor.

"A boy! What boy?"

"I didn't hear tell."

"How did he do it?"

"Waved a shawl, or somethin'. The engineer saw it, and stopped the cars."

John Fox shrugged his shoulders.

"That don't seem likely," was his comment; "where would a boy find a shawl? He didn't wear it, did he?"

His informant looked puzzled.

"Like as not he borrowed it of Mrs. Brock," he suggested.

Mrs. Brock was the woman living in the small house near by, so that the speaker's surmise was correct. It struck John Fox as possible, and he said so.

"I guess I'll go and ask the Widder Brock," he said. "She must have seen the train, livin' so near as she does."

"I'll go along with you."

The two men soon found themselves on Mrs. Brock's premises. The widow was out in the yard, hanging some clothes on the line.

"Good-mornin', Mrs. Brock," said John Fox. "You've come nigh havin' a causality here."

This was doubtless meant for casualty, but Mr. Fox was not always correct in his language.

"You're right there, Mr. Fox," answered Mrs. Brock. "I was awful skeered about it, for I thought my Nancy might be on the train. When the boy run into my yard——"

"The boy! What boy?" asked Fox eagerly. It was the same question he had asked before.

"Land sakes! don't you know?" asked Mrs. Brock, in surprise.

"How should I know? I've only just come."

"Why, it was your boy."

"My boy? I left Joel at home. I don't see how he came here."

"It wasn't Joel. It was that boy you are guardeen of."

"What! Harry Vane?" ejaculated Fox, in genuine surprise.

"I don't know his name. He didn't tell me."

"Tell me all about it, Mrs. Brock. If it was my ward, I want to know all that's took place."

"Well, you see, he ran into my yard all out of breath, and grabbin' a red tablecloth from the line, asked me if I would lend it to him. 'Land's sakes!' says I, 'what do you want of a tablecloth?'"

"'The track's washed away,' he said, 'and I want to signal the train. There's danger of an accident.' Of course I let him have it, and he did signal the train, standin' on the fence, and wavin' the tablecloth. So the train was saved!"

"And did he bring back the tablecloth?"

"Of course he did, and that wasn't all. He brought me a ten-dollar bill to pay for the use of it."

"Gave you a ten-dollar bill!" exclaimed John Fox, in amazement. "That was very wrong. I am his guardian, and I can't allow him to waste his money in that way."

"You needn't trouble yourself, John Fox," said Mrs. Brock, indignantly. "You hadn't no claim on the money if you are his guardian. A collection was took up by the passengers, and given to the boy, and he thought I ought to have my pay for the use of the tablecloth, so he gave me a ten-dollar bill—and a little gentleman he is, too!"

"A collection taken up for my ward?" repeated Fox, pricking up his ears. "Well, well! that is news. Do you know how much there was?"

"No, he didn't tell me."

"I must look into this," continued Fox, much interested. "Do you think there was as much as thirty dollars?"

"Land's sakes! how should I know?"

"If there wasn't, he shouldn't have given you so much money. Ten dollars for the use of an old tablecloth! The boy must be crazy!"

"If it had been you, I wouldn't have got ten cents," retorted Mrs. Brock.

"A quarter would have paid you well, widder!"

"I don't want any of your quarters, and I hope the boy'll keep his money."

But John Fox was already on his way back to the road. He was anxious to find his ward.

CHAPTER VI

HARRY DISAGREES WITH HIS GUARDIAN

HARRY and his guardian met at the dinner table. Mrs. Fox had provided a boiled dinner, to which Harry was ready to do justice, not only on account of his long forenoon walk, but also because the breakfast, taken at half-past six, had not been palatable. He gained accordingly in the good opinion of Mrs. Fox, who had decided in the morning that he was dainty, and disdained her humble fare.

Mr. Fox seemed unusually pleasant.

"I find, Harry," he said, clearing his throat, "that you have already been distinguishing yourself."

His wife and son both looked up in surprise. They had not heard of the washout, nor of Harry's success in saving the railroad train.

"Then you heard of the narrow escape of the train?" said Harry.

"Yes, I heard that but for your presence of mind, and Mrs. Brock's tablecloth, there would have been a smash-up."

"What on earth are you talkin' about, John Fox?" demanded his wife, curiously.

"Well, you see, Maria, the rain of last night washed away part of the railroad track, and the train would have been plunged into a gully, if our young boarder here hadn't seen the danger, and, borrowin' a tablecloth from Mrs. Brock, signaled the train."

"You don't say? What on earth was the boy doin' out that way?"

"I was exploring the town, Mrs. Fox," answered Harry, with a smile.

"That isn't all," resumed John Fox. "The passengers took up a contribution, and I expect gave quite a handsome sum to our young friend."

"I wish I'd been there!" said Joel enviously.

"Joel is never in luck!" said his mother, in accents of regret.

"If I'd only known there was goin' to be an accident," complained Joel.

"I didn't know," Harry felt called upon to remark.

"No, it was your luck!" observed Mrs. Fox, with some asperity. She was a woman who was jealous of any good fortune falling to those outside of her own family circle. She would have had all the rain fall on her husband's farm, if there hadn't been enough to "go round." She felt really aggrieved that Harry, instead of Joel, had had the good luck to save the train.

"How much did the folks give you?" asked Joel, eagerly.

"I was about to ask that question myself," said his father smoothly.

This was the question which Harry feared would be put to him. He hardly knew what to say. He did not choose to give an accurate answer, and felt justified in a little evasion.

"I've got fifteen dollars left," he replied. "I gave some money to Mrs. Brock for the use of the tablecloth."

John Fox looked disappointed and disgusted.

"You don't mean to say," he ejaculated sharply, "that you gave away almost half of your money for the use of an old tablecloth that would be dear at a dollar?"

"If I hadn't had the tablecloth, I couldn't have attracted the engineer's attention," said Harry mildly.

"You must be crazy to throw away money like that," said John Fox angrily. "As your guardian, I have a right to protest against it."

"You must remember, Mr. Fox," said Harry firmly, "that you are my guardian so far as the money left me by my father goes. This was a special windfall."

"I should say you needed a guardian if you are goin' to throw away money in that style. Mrs. Fox, what do you say to his givin' ten dollars for the use of an old red tablecloth?"

"I say that I'd sell all my tablecloths for that money. As you say, the boy acted like a fool."

"A dollar would have been handsome—munificent," proceeded Fox, stumbling a little over the last word.

"Ten cents would have been enough," said Mrs. Fox, whom her best friends had never credited with liberality.

"And you might have given me the rest of the ten dollars," chimed in Joel.

"To be sure!" said his mother. "You'd ought to have thought of them that live in the same house with you."

"When I heard you'd given ten dollars to the Widder Brock," continued Mrs. Fox, "I concluded, of course, that you must have received fifty dollars."

"Twenty-five would satisfy me," added Joel.

"To be sure, but railroad accidents don't come every day."

"I acted according to my judgment," said Harry calmly.

"Then I don't think much of your judgment—that's all I say," observed Mrs. Fox.

There was a little more conversation on the subject, but Harry remained tranquil, and did not appear disturbed by the criticisms elicited by his conduct. He heartily hoped that his guardian's family would not find out how large a sum he had received.

When dinner was over, Harry was about to leave the

house, when John Fox said insinuatingly: "Don't you think you'd better give me that money to keep for you?"

"Thank you, Mr. Fox," said Harry, "but I think I can take care of it myself."

"Fifteen dollars is a good deal of money for a boy like you to carry round with you."

"I don't think I shall lose it, sir."

"Perhaps not, but you will be tempted to spend it wastefully."

"I don't think so, sir. I am not rich enough to venture to waste my money."

"I'm sorry you don't look at the matter in the right light, Harry. Allow me to remind you that I am your guardian."

"Yes, sir; I am quite aware of that fact. The little property that my father left me will be placed in your hands."

"Ahem! It entitles me to your earnings, besides."

"I don't agree with you, Mr. Fox."

"I am considerably older than you are, Harry, and you can trust my judgment. You'd better hand me the money."

"I must decline to do so, Mr. Fox. I will promise you, however, to take good care of it, and not waste it."

John Fox didn't look amiable. He was in doubt whether he might not properly take from his ward the money by force, but it occurred to him that it would be better not to assert his authority quite so soon.

"We will speak of this again," he said. "Think over what I have said, and you will see that I am in the right."

When Harry went out of doors, Joel followed him.

"I say, Harry," he began, "you're awful lucky."

"I think the passengers on the train were awful lucky, as you express it."

"I wa'n't thinkin' of them," remarked Joel truly. "I

say, now that dad's your guardian, that makes you and me sort of brothers, don't it?"

"Well, perhaps so," answered Harry, smiling.

"And it would be only fair for you to give me half that money?"

Harry eyed Joel's eager face curiously, and noticed the cupidity expressed in his eyes. It was easy to see that Joel's organ of acquisitiveness was well developed.

"Do you really mean that?" he asked.

"Of course I do. Brothers ought to divide, hadn't they?"

"I am not sure about that. Have you got any money?"

"Yes, I've got thirty-five dollars in the savings bank. It took me an awful long time to save it up."

"Then if you'll give me ten dollars of that, we'll each have twenty-five. As you say, brothers ought to divide."

"Oh, now, you're jokin'!" exclaimed Joel. "That money don't count. Come, gimme five dollars, and I'll let you off at that."

"I would rather not," answered Harry quietly. "However, I've got a dollar of my own besides, and I'll give you that."

He took the dollar bill from his pocketbook and handed it to Joel, who seized it with avidity, and speculated as to whether he could not get more out of his father's ward after a while.

"This is rather a peculiar family," thought Harry. "It is well I didn't bring all my money home. I wonder how soon Mr. Fox will make another attempt to secure the sum I have with me."

The attempt was made that same night.

CHAPTER VII

UP IN THE ATTIC

HARRY was afraid he would be expected to occupy the same room with Joel, in which case he could hope for no privacy, and would be unable to conceal his money, which he had little doubt his guardian intended to secure, either by fair means or foul. It chanced, however, that Joel slept in a small bedroom opening out of his parents' chamber. So Harry was assigned an attic room, in the end of the house, the sides sloping down to the eaves. It was inferior to the chambers on the second floor, but our hero was not disposed to complain. He valued solitude more than superior finish.

Harry's suspicion was aroused by the circumstance that his guardian did not again refer to his money, nor did he manifest any disappointment at his ward's declining to intrust him with it.

"He is foxy," thought Harry, smiling at the well-worn joke.

During the evening, Joel brought out a backgammon board, and proposed to Harry to play. If there had been anything to read Harry would have preferred entertaining himself in that way, but Mr. Fox didn't appear to be literary. There were a few books in the house, but they were not of an attractive character.

"Have you any stories in the house, Joel?" asked Harry, after looking over the dreary assortment of volumes.

"No," answered Mrs. Fox, who had overheard the question. "I don't think much of story books. They only waste time. I never let Joel read stories."

"I don't want to, mam," said Joel dutifully.

Joel spoke the truth, for he had no liking for books of any kind.

"Did your pa let you read story books?" continued Mrs. Fox.

"Yes," answered Harry briefly.

"I am surprised to hear it," continued the lady.

Harry did not reply. He did not think it would be worth while to get into an argument with Mrs. Fox, for whose judgment he had very little respect.

"You can play backgammon with Joel," said Mrs. Fox, "unless you want to read 'Baxter's Saints' Rest,' or Dr. Richardson's sermons."

"I think I will play backgammon," said Harry.

Partly in backgammon, partly in conversation with the son and heir of the Foxes, the time passed till half-past eight o'clock.

"Joel, you can go to bed," said his mother. "It is half-past eight."

Joel yawned, and interposed no objection.

"You may as well go, too, Henry," said Mrs. Fox.

"My name is Harry, madam."

"I shall call you Henry. I consider Harry a foolish nickname," said the lady severely.

Harry smiled. It really mattered little to him what Mr. or Mrs. Fox called him.

"Mrs. Fox is right," said his guardian. "It's good for a boy to go to bed early; ma and I go to bed at nine. It gives us a good night's rest. Besides, it saves candles."

It may be remarked that the Fox mansion was illuminated by tallow candles, probably on the score of economy, though at present kerosene would probably be cheaper as well as more satisfactory. Every few minutes it was found necessary to use a clumsy pair of snuffers, such as some of my readers are probably familiar with. The room was so poorly lighted that, except in the immediate vicinity of

the candle, it would have been found difficult either to read or sew.

"I am ready to go to bed, sir," said Harry.

In fact, he felt rather sleepy, and anticipated little pleasure in sitting up in the far from exciting company of Mr. and Mrs. Fox.

"Joel," said his mother, "take this candle and show Henry upstairs in the attic chamber."

"Yes, mam."

So, preceded by Joel, Harry went up two flights of stairs to the attic room reserved for him. It was the only room that had been finished off, and the garret outside looked dark and forbidding.

"I would be scared to sleep up here," said his companion. "If you're afraid, I'll ask mam to let you sleep with me."

"I shall not be at all frightened, Joel," said Harry hastily. "Besides, I like to sleep alone."

"I thought you might be scared," said Joel.

"What should scare me?"

"I don't know, but it seems lonely and dark."

"There is no danger. If burglars break into the house, they will visit the second floor first."

"I guess they won't come here. Dad keeps all his money in the bank."

"You've got a dollar, you know, Joel."

"Don't tell dad! He'd take it away from me, and I want to keep it. I might want to spend it, you know."

"I won't mention it if you don't want me to."

"Good-night, then. Just hold the candle while I go downstairs."

When he was fairly all alone, Harry began to look about him, to ascertain in what kind of quarters he was to pass the night. To begin with he examined the door, to find out whether there was any way of locking or securing it. He ascertained that it was a common latch door, and

there was no lock. There was nothing to prevent anyone entering the room during the night. There was a small cot bed in one corner, a chair and an old wooden chest, which probably contained articles belonging to Mrs. Fox, perhaps blankets or bed linen. There was no bureau nor washstand. The absence of the latter annoyed Harry. He had always been in the habit of washing himself as soon as he got out of bed.

"Washing doesn't seem to be provided for in this house," thought Harry.

He learned afterward that he was expected to go downstairs and wash in a large tin basin in the kitchen sink—wiping his face on a brown, roll towel which was used by the entire family. This was quite unsatisfactory to Harry, who was scrupulously neat in his tastes. His parents had always encouraged this trait in him, but it was very evident that Mr. and Mrs. Fox differed in many respects from the father and mother he had been so unfortunate in losing so early.

"This isn't a palace exactly," Harry said to himself, as he surveyed his scantily furnished chamber. "Luckily the bed"—feeling it—"seems tolerably comfortable. If I can get a good night's rest, I won't mind it."

Then came the thought, "What was he to do with his money?" Perhaps he was unduly suspicious, but he could not help thinking that after he was asleep Mr. Fox might pay him a visit, and try to secure by stealth what he had refused to give up. Now Harry was determined to keep his money. He felt that he had the best right to it, and that Mr. Fox, though his guardian, had no claim to it. Yet how could he secure it? Should he put it in his pocket, he was convinced that this would be the very first place in which Mr. Fox would look. If, on the other hand, it were not found in his pocket, his guardian would search in every other place that he could think of, and probably would eventually find it.

Now it so happened that Harry was the possessor of two pocketbooks—one, shabby and well worn, which he had failed to throw away on buying another just before he left home. In connection with this, a scheme for outwitting Mr. Fox came into his mind. He folded up a fragment of newspaper, and put it into the old pocketbook, bulging it out till it looked well-filled, and this he left in the pocket of his pantaloons.

“Now to hide the other,” said he to himself.

He looked about the room, seeking for some place of concealment. Finally he noticed in one portion of the floor a square board, which looked as if it might be lifted. He stooped over, and succeeded in raising it. The space beneath was about a foot in depth—the lower level being the lathing and plastering of the room below.

“That will do,” said Harry, in a tone of satisfaction. “I don’t think Mr. Fox will find my money here,” and dropping the pocketbook into the cavity he replaced the square board. Then he went to bed and awaited results.

CHAPTER VIII

MR. FOX IS DISAPPOINTED

WHEN Harry had gone up to his bed, Mr. and Mrs. Fox naturally began to compare notes respecting him.

“That new boy rides a high horse,” said Mrs. Fox grimly.

“So he does,” assented her husband.

“Are you going to allow it?”

“Certainly not.”

“He has had his own way pretty much so far, it strikes me.”

“He hasn’t found out what kind of a man John Fox

is," remarked her husband, with an air of determination.

"I'm afraid he'll have a bad influence on Joel."

"No, he won't, Mrs. Fox; I mean to subdue him. I mean to let him know who is master here. No boy shall defy John Fox."

"He wouldn't give up his money to you, though you are his guardeen."

"Very true, but I mean to have it all the same. There's two ways of doin' things, Mrs. Fox. Of course, I might have taken the money from him by violence, but I'd rather get it by strategy."

"How are you going to do it?" inquired his wife, with some interest.

"I shall go up to his bedroom after he is asleep, and then it will be the easiest thing in the world to take the pocketbook without his knowin' it."

"He'll know it in the mornin'."

"Let him! Possession is nine p'int's of the law, Mrs. Fox."

"He might say you stole it."

"He can't do that, for I'm his guardeen, don't you see? Oh, I've thought it all over, Mrs. Fox."

"He'll be apt to make a fuss," said the lady thoughtfully.

"What'll it amount to? Makin' a fuss won't bring back the money. What do you think of my plan?"

"It isn't a bad one; but if I was in your place I'd take it from him by main force. I would have no shilly-shally business about it."

John Fox looked with some admiration at his wife.

"You'd ought to be a man, Maria," he said. "You're bold and resolute, and ain't afeared of anything."

"Not even of my husband," added Mrs. Fox, with elephantine humor, smiling grimly.

"Well, no, there ain't no call for you to be afeared of

the partner of your life. But, Mrs. F., there's a time to be bold and a time to be Foxy," and Mr. Fox smiled in appreciation of the well-worn joke.

"Well, well, I shan't interfere. I s'pose you know your business best. All I've got to say is, I wouldn't let no boy boss me."

"No boy shall boss me, Mrs. F., responded John Fox, loftily. "My ward will find that he must obey his guardian."

"And his guardian's wife," added Mrs. Fox.

"Of course, I shall insist upon his treating you with proper respect, Mrs. Fox. Still, as he is a boy, he more properly comes under my control. If we should ever take a girl into the family, it would be for you to regulate her, and I should stand aside and not interfere."

Mrs. Fox was not altogether satisfied.

"That sounds very well," she said, "but I want it understood that this boy hez got to observe the rules and regulations of this house, and I'm 'the one that makes 'em."

"Oh, there won't be any trouble about that, mam," said John Fox, half impatiently, for he was quite aware that his wife had a will of her own, and, though he called himself the master of the house, he was far from controlling its mistress.

A little after ten Mr. Fox, considering that Harry must be sound asleep, decided to make him a visit. He removed his shoes, and in his stocking feet, candle in hand, began to ascend the narrow and steep staircase which led to the attic.

"Shall I go with you, John?" queried his helpmeet.

"No, I guess I can manage to carry the boy's pocket-book," responded Mr. Fox, sarcastically.

"I didn't know but he might resist you," explained Mrs. Fox.

“Even if he does, I guess I am a match for a boy of his size.”

“Well, have your own way, then.”

“My own way is best, Mrs. F.”

“That’s what you always say. If you fail it won’t be my fault.”

Mr. Fox certainly did seem to be in the right, but his wife wanted to share in the excitement of the night visit. There was something alluring in the thought of creeping upstairs, and removing, by stealth, the pocketbook of the new inmate of their home.

Left to himself, Mr. Fox pursued his way up to the attic stairs. The steps creaked a little under his weight, and, much to his annoyance, when he reached the landing at the top he coughed.

“I hope the boy won’t hear me,” he said to himself.

He paused an instant, then softly opened the door of Harry’s chamber.

All seemed satisfactory. Our hero was lying quietly in bed, apparently in a peaceful sleep. Ordinarily he would have been fast asleep by this time, but the expectation of a visit from his guardian had kept him awake beyond his usual time. He had heard Mr. Fox cough, and so, even before the door opened, he had warning of the visit.

Harry was not a nervous boy, and had such command of himself, that, even when Mr. Fox bent over, and, by the light of the candle, examined his face, he never stirred nor winked, though he very much wanted to laugh.

“All is safe! The boy is sound asleep,” whispered Mr. Fox to himself.

He set the candle on the floor, and then taking up Harry’s pantaloons thrust his hand into the pockets.

The very first pocket contained the pocketbook which our hero had put there. Mr. Fox would have opened and examined its contents on the spot, but he heard a cough

from the bed, and, apprehending that his ward might wake up, quickly put the pocketbook into his own pocket, and, taking up the candle, noiselessly withdrew from the chamber.

After he was fairly gone, Harry had a quiet laugh to himself.

"What will the old fellow say when he finds out he has been humbugged?" said he to himself. "I only wish I could be present."

Mr. Fox returned in triumph to his own chamber, where his wife was anxiously waiting for him.

"Have you got it, Mr. F.?" she asked eagerly.

"Got it? Why shouldn't I get it?" demanded her husband. "What I undertake, Mrs. F., I generally carry through."

"Oh, yes; you're terrible smart, we all know. Well, open it, and let us see what it contains."

"Don't be impatient, Mrs. F.," said her husband, tantalizingly. "There's plenty of time," and he slowly drew out the pocketbook, and held it in his hand.

"You ought to let me have half the money," said Mrs. Fox.

"Why should I? You seem to forget, Mrs. F., that the money isn't mine. It belongs to my ward, and it is my duty merely to take charge of it."

"I can take charge of it as well as you, I reckon, Mr. Fox."

"Perhaps you can, and then again perhaps you can't. However, I will open the wallet."

This Mr. Fox proceeded to do. But no sooner did his glance rest on the contents than his lower jaw fell, and his eyes opened wide in perplexity.

"Well, what are you staring at like a fool?" demanded his wife, who was not so situated that she could see the contents of the pocketbook.

"Look at this, Mrs. F.," said her husband, in a hollow

voice. "There's no money here—only this piece of newspaper."

"Well, well, of all the fools I ever saw you are about the most stupid!" ejaculated Mrs. Fox. "What you undertake you generally carry through, do you? After all the fuss you've brought down a pocketbook stuffed with waste paper."

"I don't understand it," said Fox, his face assuming a look of perplexity. "Surely the boy told the truth when he said he had fifteen dollars."

"Of course! Joel saw the money—a roll of bills, and saw him take them out of his pocketbook. He must have taken them out. Did you search all his pockets?"

"No; when I found the pocketbook I thought I was all right."

"Just like a man!" retorted Mrs. Fox. "I'll go up myself, and see if I can't manage better than you."

"Then you'd better take this wallet, and put it back in his pocket."

"Give it to me, then."

With a firm step Mrs. Fox took the candle, and took her turn in going up the attic stairs.

CHAPTER IX

MRS. FOX COMES TO GRIEF

HARRY confidently anticipated a second visit to his chamber. He concluded that when Mr. Fox examined the purloined pocketbook, and ascertained the worthlessness of its contents, he would try his luck a second time. He therefore lay awake and watchful.

He was rather surprised when the door was again opened, and Mrs. Fox entered. Opening his eyes a little

way, he saw her, after a brief glance at the bed, go to the chair containing his pantaloons, and put back the deceptive wallet. She was about to prosecute a further search, when Harry decided that matters had gone far enough. He did not fancy their night visits, and meant to stop them if he could.

Chance favored his design. A puff of air from the door, which Mrs. Fox had left wide open, extinguished the candle, and left the room, as there was no moon, in profound darkness.

"Drat the candle!" he heard Mrs. Fox say.

Then a mischievous idea came to Harry. In his native village lived a man who had passed a considerable time in the wild regions beyond the Missouri river, and had mingled familiarly with the Indians. From him Harry had learned how to imitate the Indian war whoop. Some of my readers may have heard such an imitation, and they will understand that it is rather a startling sound, especially when unexpected.

"I'll scare the old lady," thought Harry, smiling to himself.

Immediately there rang out from the bed, in the darkness and silence, a terrific war whoop, given in Harry's most effective style.

Mrs. Fox was not a nervous woman ordinarily, but she was undeniably frightened at the unexpected sound.

"Heavens and earth, what's that?" she ejaculated, and dropping our hero's clothes, retreated in disorder, almost stumbling downstairs in her precipitate flight. Dashing into the chamber where Mr. Fox was waiting for her, she sank into a chair gasping for breath.

"Good gracious, Maria, what's the matter?" exclaimed her husband, gazing at her in wonder.

"I—don't—know," she gasped.

"You look as if you had seen a ghost."

"I haven't seen anything," said his wife, recovering her

breath, "but I've heard something terrible. Didn't you hear anything, Mr. Fox?"

"No, the door was shut."

"It's my belief the attic is haunted," said Mrs. Fox impressively.

"Pooh, nonsense! you must be crazy."

"It's easy enough to say pooh! but if you had been in the room you wouldn't feel like saying it."

"Tell me all about it," said her husband, his curiosity aroused.

"I went upstairs and put back the wallet," said his wife, "and was looking to see if I could find another, when all at once the candle went out, and a terrible noise shook the chamber."

"What was it like, Mrs. F.?"

"I can't tell you. I never heard anything like it before. All I know is, I wouldn't go up there again to-night for anything."

"It's very strange—I can't make it out. Did the boy sleep through it all?"

"How can I tell? The candle was out, I tell you."

"Perhaps he blew it out."

"Perhaps you're a fool, Mr. Fox. It wasn't near the bed, and he was fast asleep, for I looked at him. It made me think of—of Peter," and Mrs. Fox shuddered.

Peter had been taken from the poorhouse three years ago by Mr. Fox, and apprenticed to him by the town authorities. According to popular report he had been cruelly treated and insufficiently fed, until he was taken sick, and had died in the very bedroom where Mrs. Fox had been so frightened. This may explain how it was that a woman so strong-minded had had her nerves so easily upset. Though her conscience was not especially sensitive, occasionally there passed through her mind unpleasant thoughts of the poor drudge whose life she and her husband had contributed to make miserable.

"We won't talk of Peter," said Mr. Fox shortly, for to him, also, the subject was an unpleasant one. "I suppose you didn't find another wallet."

"No, I didn't. You can order the boy to give it up tomorrow. The best thing to do now is to go to bed and rest."

The breakfast hour at the house of Mr. Fox was half-past six. Harry was called at six, and was punctual at the table. Mr. Fox cast a suspicious glance at his ward, but the boy looked so perfectly unconcerned that he acquitted him of any knowledge of the night visit.

"How did you sleep, Henry?" asked Mr. Fox.

"Soundly, thank you," answered Harry politely.

"You didn't hear any—strange noises, then?"

"No; did you?"

"Ahem! yes I heard a peculiar noise not long after you went to bed."

"It didn't wake me up," said Harry, with truth.

"The boy must sleep sound," thought Mrs. Fox, "for of all the unearthly screeching I ever heard, that was the worst."

"Now, Henry," said Mr. Fox, after breakfast, "we may as well speak of our future arrangements."

"Very well, sir."

"I take it that with your small inheritance you will prefer to earn a part of your living by labor?"

"You are right there, sir."

"I have considerable to do on my twenty acres of land, and I can give you work here."

"What compensation do you offer, sir?"

"Why, you see, you are a boy, and of course a boy cannot do as much as a man."

"I think I can do as much as some men, Mr. Fox."

"Well, if you could, you couldn't get the same wages. If you work around according to my directions during

the day, you can have your evenings to yourself, and I will consider it in your board."

"I should like to have you tell me precisely what you will allow me," said Harry, whom this speech did not impress with a very high idea of Mr. Fox's liberality.

"As a boarder I should have to charge you five dollars a week for your board, and fifty cents extra for your washing—that would go to Mrs. Fox; as well as, say twenty-five cents a week for your mending. That also would go to my wife. Now, if you work for me, I will take off three dollars, making the charge to you only two dollars and seventy-five cents per week."

"Don't you think, Mr. Fox, that is rather low pay for my services? I can't afford to pay it. It would use up my small inheritance in about two years, not to speak of my outlay for clothes."

"I might say two dollars and a quarter," said Mr. Fox, deliberating.

Harry smiled to himself. He had not the slightest idea of working for any such trifle, but he did not care to announce his determination yet.

"I will pay full price for a week, Mr. Fox," he said, "and during that time I will consider your offer."

"I may not offer you as favorable terms a week from now," said Fox, who wanted to get his ward to work at once.

"I will take my chance of it, sir. I prefer to have a few days of freedom."

"By the way, Harry, don't you think you had better give me your money to keep? You might lose it."

"You are very kind, Mr. Fox; but I am not afraid of losing it."

After breakfast Harry went to walk. His steps naturally tended to the place where he had left the greater part of his treasure. It was possible that he had been seen

hiding it, and he thought on the whole it would be better to find another place of concealment.

"Joel," said his mother, "follow Henry, and see where he goes. He may be goin' to hide his money. But don't let him see you."

"All right, mam; I'll do it. I wish I had followed him yesterday."

CHAPTER X

JOEL AS DETECTIVE

A POSITION as detective would have suited Joel. Whatever was secret or stealthy had a charm for him. He liked to pry into the secrets of other people, and had more than once managed to overhear conversations between his father and mother which they had intended to keep from him.

In the present instance he managed to shadow Harry very successfully. The task was made easier, because our hero had no idea that anyone was following him. If he had turned round he might have caught sight of Joel wriggling along in such a way as to escape notice.

"So he's goin' to the railroad," said Joel to himself, when Harry's direction became evident. "Wonder if he expects to stop another train. If he does he'll have to divide with me."

Arrived at the railroad track, Harry's course diverged to the hillock, at the top of which he had concealed his treasure.

"What in the world's he goin' up there for?" thought Joel, puzzled. "It won't do for me to foller him, or he'll see me and smell a rat."

Joel posted himself at a point where he had a good view of the elevation, and could see what Harry was doing.

He spied on general principles, and expected to make a notable discovery. When, therefore, he saw our hero digging at a particular spot, he concluded that he was going to hide the fifteen dollars there. What was his surprise and delight when he saw him dig up and expose to view a large roll of bills, evidently far exceeding in value the small sum which had excited his cupidity!

"Oh, cracky!" ejaculated Joel, "there must be a hundred dollars in that roll of bills. Wouldn't dad open his eyes if he saw it? Harry's a sly one, to make us think he had only fifteen dollars. If I don't get some of it, my name isn't Joel Fox."

Unconscious of observation, Harry held the money in his hand and deliberated. Should he replace it in the hole or find another place of concealment? On the whole, he decided upon the latter. He reflected that some one might find it, and, if so, there would be small chance of his recovering it. He put it in his pocket, resolved to think over at his leisure its ultimate place of deposit.

Now, unfortunately for Joel, just at this moment he slipped from his perch on the branch of a small tree, and for about half a minute what Harry did was concealed from him. He clambered into the tree again, but only to see Harry filling up the hole again. This was done so as to avoid exciting the curiosity of anyone who might notice that the earth had been disturbed.

"He's put it back," thought Joel. "Ho, ho! maybe he'll find it there when he comes to look for it next time."

He didn't want Harry to catch sight of him when he descended from the hill, and accordingly scuttled away sufficiently far to escape suspicion, yet not too far to lose sight of Harry's movements.

Five minutes later Harry descended from the hill, and bent his steps toward that part of that railway where the accident had occurred. Joel, who had hastened away in a different direction, went back to the hill as soon as he

thought it would be safe, and eagerly ascended it. He found without difficulty the spot where Harry had been digging. With the help of a fragment of wood which he had picked up below, he in turn began to dig—his eyes glistening with expectation and cupidity.

“If I find the money,” he said to himself, “I won’t tell dad. If I did, he would take it all, and I wouldn’t get a cent of it. I know a better way than that. I’ll keep it all myself, and nobody will be the wiser. Harry won’t know who’s got it, and he won’t dare to make any fuss. Won’t I feel rich with a hundred dollars! I’ll save it all up, and keep it till I’m a man.”

It was a very pretty air castle that Joel was building, and the thought that he would be virtually stealing money belonging to another did not trouble him in the least. His conscience was not remarkably sensitive, and it only struck him as a very creditable piece of strategy.

He kept digging, but gradually became anxious, as the expected treasure did not show itself.

“I’m sure I have dug deep enough,” he said to himself. “Can I have got the wrong place?”

But no! there was little doubt of that. He had watched carefully the spot when Harry had been at work. Moreover, the ground had not been disturbed in any other place near at hand.

“He must have took the money when I fell from the tree,” thought Joel, crestfallen. “He’s served me a mean trick. Won’t I tell dad, though, and get him into trouble? Oh, no!”

Meanwhile, Harry, not knowing how narrowly he had escaped being robbed, pursued his way to the railway. He had his money in his pocket, but he began to feel the embarrassment of riches. He was quite at a loss to know what to do with it. To keep it by him in the house of his guardian after the experiences of the previous night would be hazardous. Though he was fully resolved to defend

his property, he was quite aware that his guardian was stronger than himself, and could take it by force if he undertook to do so.

"If I were only in my old home," he thought, "I would ask Mr. Howard to take care of it for me. Then I should know it was all right."

But Mr. Howard was a hundred miles away, and that arrangement was hardly practicable.

Then he thought of the president of the railroad, to whom he was principally indebted for the money.

"If I could only see him," he thought, "I would ask him to take care of it for me."

What was his surprise, when on reaching the depot the first person on whom his eyes fell was the very gentleman of whom he was thinking.

"How do you do, sir?" said Harry politely.

"Ah, my young friend that saved the train!" said the president cordially. "I hope you haven't spent the money you received on riotous living?"

"My living has been far from riotous," answered Harry, smiling. "At my boarding place there is very little chance of my falling a victim to the gout. But, sir, I have a favor to ask of you."

"Very well, my lad; what is it?"

"Will you take care of my money for me? I don't want to spend it, and I am afraid of losing it."

"How much have you?"

"I had nearly three hundred dollars. I should like to put two hundred and fifty into your hands."

"Suppose I should take a sudden flight to Canada?" said the president jocosely.

"I will take the risk of that, sir."

"Well, my boy, if you really desire it, I will take the money."

"I shall regard it a very great favor."

No sooner said than done. They went into the depot,

and Harry, counting out two hundred and fifty dollars, passed it over to the president.

"I will give you a receipt for it," said the railroad official.

"It isn't necessary, sir."

"It is business," was the brief reply.

He made out a brief receipt, signing it "Thomas Conway, President of the Craven County Railroad," and Harry pocketed it with a feeling of relief.

"I will send it to Mr. Howard, and get him to keep it for me," Harry decided. "Then my guardian can't get on the track of it."

While he was standing in front of the depot waiting for the arrival of the eight-thirty train, Joel came up.

"Goin' a-travelin'?" asked Joel, with a grin.

"Not this morning."

"I wish I had a hundred dollars!" continued Joel, surveying Harry sharply.

"Suppose you had, what then?"

"I'd make a journey out West. Say, Harry, did you ever have a hundred dollars in your pocket?"

"Yes."

"Maybe you've got it now?"

"Where should I get it?" demanded Harry, eyeing Joel sharply in his turn.

"I do no. Jest empty your pockets, and le'me see how much you've got."

"Thank you; I don't see any use in it," said Harry coldly.

"You dassent!"

"Very well! Call it that."

"Joel's been spying upon me. He must have seen me on the hill," concluded Harry. "It's well I gave most of my money to Mr. Conway."

CHAPTER XI

MR. FOX LEARNS HARRY'S SECRET

HARRY had acted none too soon. It happened that his secret had been discovered not only by Joel, but by Joel's father, that very morning.

Mr. Fox had been surprised that Harry had received so little, especially when he considered how large a sum he had given to Mrs. Brock. Mentally he had stigmatized his ward as a reckless fool to part with so large a proportion of his money. Yet he had never doubted that fifteen dollars was all that Harry had left, and, small as it was, he was eager to get it into his hands, as we already know.

About ten o'clock Mr. Fox had occasion to go to the village. In the post office he met an acquaintance from a neighboring town, with whom he passed the usual compliments.

"By the way, Fox," said his friend, "I had a narrow escape the other day."

"What was it, Pearson?"

"Came near being smashed up on the railroad."

"Where?"

"Here, down by your depot. Didn't you hear of the washout?"

"Yes. Were you on the train?"

"I was. There would have been an end of us, but for a brave boy, who signaled the train in time."

"That boy was my ward," said John Fox, complacently.

"You don't say so! Well, he was a lucky chap."

"I don't think so. He didn't get much for his bravery. On my word, I think he was meanly treated."

"I don't see how you can say that. How much money did he get?"

"Twenty-five dollars, and of that he gave ten to the woman whose tablecloth he borrowed."

"There's some mistake about that. There must have been forty or fifty bills put into his hands, and I know that there were two ten-dollar bills among them. I myself gave two dollars."

"Is this true?" ejaculated Fox, in amazement.

"Just as true as I'm standing here. If there wasn't two or three hundred dollars I'll eat my head."

"The artful young rascal!" exclaimed Fox, in virtuous indignation. "He told me he had only fifteen dollars left after what he gave to Mrs. Brock."

"Perhaps he thought you would take it from him. The boy was smart," said Pearson, laughing.

"You call it smart! I call it base and treacherous!" said John Fox, very much excited.

"Did he give you the fifteen dollars?"

"No, he didn't. He wanted to keep it himself. As it was a small sum, I let him do it."

Mr. Fox was silent as to the character of the efforts he made to secure the money.

"After all, the money belonged to the boy, Fox."

"I don't agree with you. Ain't I his gardeen, I'd like to know?"

"I won't deny it, though I don't know anything about it. I'll take your word for it."

"Then, of course, I'm entitled to his money," continued Mr. Fox.

"To what money was left him, I admit; that is, to keep in trust for him. But this money was different."

"No difference at all! As his gardeen it's my duty to take it from him, and not let him spend it foolishly, as I've no doubt he would."

"He must have hidden it somewhere."

"I'll find it, wherever it is. If that boy expects to outwit John Fox, he's got to get up pretty early in the morning."

"Have you been appointed his guardian?"

"Well, no, not yet; but I was his father's choice, and of course there won't be any opposition."

"How old is the boy?"

"About fifteen or sixteen."

"He might make a different choice. The law would allow it in a boy of his age."

"Don't you go to putting that into his head," said Mr. Fox uneasily.

"I am not likely to see him. Did his father know you?"

"Well, no; we never met."

"That explains it."

"Explains what?" demanded Fox suspiciously.

"Oh, nothing particular," answered Pearson evasively.

Mr. Fox suspected that he meant something uncomplimentary, but did not push the question.

"Of all the artful boys," said Fox to himself, "this boy, Harry, takes the cake. But it won't do him any good. He'll find that John Fox is a match for him."

Mr. Fox walked thoughtfully away. He was considering how he should get hold of his ward's money. It was not a question easy to answer. Evidently Harry was a boy who kept his own counsel, and knew how to take care of himself.

As Mr. Fox was walking up the road he fell in with Joel.

"Where've you been, Joel?" he asked.

"Follerin' Harry, as you told me to."

"So I did. Well, where did he go?"

"To the top of the hill about five minutes walk from the depot."

"What did he do there?"

"What'll you give to know, dad?"

"No foolin' with your father, Joel. Tell me right away."

"I've found out something, dad; something that'll surprise you."

"I don't know about that. I've found out something myself."

"This is something important—awful important. What do you think he did upon the hill?"

"Hid his money?" suggested Mr. Fox.

"You're mighty near, but you ain't right. He dug it up. It was hid there already."

"Did you see it? How much was there?" asked Fox eagerly.

"There was a big roll of bills. There must have been over a hundred dollars."

Joel expected his father to exhibit astonishment, but in this he was disappointed. Mr. Fox nodded in a satisfied way.

"Then that story that Pearson told me was correct," he said.

"What did he tell you?"

"He said there was a big collection made for the boy by the passengers; that it must have amounted to two hundred dollars or more."

Joel whistled.

"I guess it's so," he replied. "There was a big roll of bills he took out of a hole in the ground."

"What did he do with it?"

"Put it in his pocket."

"That's good. Then he's got it with him now; eh, Joel?"

"Yes, dad."

"That suits me. Joel, I must have that money."

"Will you give me some, dad?"

"What should I give you any for, I'd like to know?"

"Because I told you."

"You told me what I knew before. Besides, the money won't be mine. I'm to take care of it as his guardeen."

"I wish I was somebody's guardeen," said Joel.

"It wouldn't do much good. It's more bother than it's worth."

"Then why don't you give it up, dad?" asked Joel shrewdly.

"P'rhaps I will some time."

"After Harry's money is all gone," thought Joel.

"On the whole, Joel, you may as well keep on follerin' Harry to see what he does with the money. I want him to keep it about him, and I'll get hold of it afore mornin'."

"All right, dad."

Joel turned back and joined Harry, who was still near the depot.

"I thought I'd come back," he explained. "If I go home the old man will make me work."

"Have you seen your father?" asked Harry.

"I saw him up the road a few minutes ago."

"And he put you on my track," said Harry to himself, with a smile. "You're too late, my young friend. The money is disposed of."

Having nothing further to conceal, our hero chatted socially with Joel, who flattered himself he was playing the detective in creditable style.

CHAPTER XII

HARRY BECOMES A PRISONER

"JOEL seems to have a great partiality for my society," thought Harry, when, after dinner, his guardian's son continued to follow him about.

Our hero would have been quite willing to dispense with

Joel's companionship, but, being good-natured, he did not feel like dismissing him, as he would have done had he suspected that the boy was acting as a spy upon him, at his father's request.

Mr. Fox said very little to his ward at the table, but Harry felt that he was eying him intently.

"I wonder what makes me so interesting," he asked himself, half inclined to laugh.

Mrs. Fox, too, was very silent. She had learned from her husband the extent of Harry's good fortune, and felt very indignant at the new boy's evident intention of keeping the money in his own possession. On the whole, therefore, the dinner party was not very social. Joel alone seemed in good spirits, and chatted and laughed, occasionally glancing significantly from his father to Harry. He was looking forward with enjoyment to the scene between them, when his father demanded the money. He had no doubt that Harry would have to give in, and while he had no particular dislike for our hero, he was prepared to rejoice over his humiliation.

After supper Harry was about to leave the room when Mr. Fox stopped him.

"Wait a moment, young man," he said, in a commanding tone.

"Very well, sir," returned Harry quietly; "do you wish to speak to me?"

"Yes, I do wish to speak to you, Harry Vane."

"Aha! there's something in the wind," thought Harry, and he resumed his seat.

"You have deceived me," continued Mr. Fox, severely.

Harry didn't seem intimidated, but said composedly: "Will you be kind enough to let me know in what manner I have deceived you?"

"You have concealed from me the amount of money you received yesterday for saving the railroad train."

"I deny that, sir. I have not told you, because I did not think it was necessary."

"Am I not your guardeen? I ask you that."

"Not yet, sir."

"Well, I shall be, and that is the same thing. It is my duty to take care of your money."

"The money I received for my service yesterday was not left me by my father. It belongs to me, and I mean to keep it," said Harry firmly.

"We shall see about that," said John Fox, nodding his head with emphasis. "We shall see about that. Now, will you answer the question I am going to ask you?"

"What is it, sir?"

"How much money did the passengers give you?"

"Almost three hundred dollars," answered Harry composedly.

"Did you ever hear the like?" exclaimed Mrs. Fox, in amazement. "If it had only been Joel."

"Thunder!" exclaimed that young gentleman. "Well, you was lucky. No such luck for me!"

"It is well you have told me," said John Fox; "not but I knew before. I met one of the passengers to-day, and he gave me an idea how much it was. You will please hand it over to me, and I will take care of it."

"I shall not be able to comply with your request, Mr. Fox," said Harry.

"You won't, hey? And why not?"

"Because I have not the money with me."

"I don't believe it. You had it this morning."

"That is true, though I don't know how you found out."

"And Joel has been with you ever since, so you haven't had time to hide it."

"So that was the reason you favored me with your company, Joel," said Harry, with a glance at his guardian's son.

Joel grinned, but did not speak.

"Oh, yes; I was too sharp for you," said John Fox, complacently. "I've trapped you at last."

"I think you are mistaken, Mr. Fox," said Harry, showing no signs of confusion or alarm.

"All you've got to do is to hand over that money now, Harry Vane. Mind, I will have it."

"I assure you, Mr. Fox, that I haven't the money with me."

"Where is it, then?" asked Mr. Fox, incredulous.

"I managed to put it in a place of security, in spite of Joel's watchfulness."

"I shan't believe it unless you tell me where it is."

"Did you put it back in the hole?" asked Joel, in eager curiosity.

"So you were watching me this morning? No, I did not. If I had you would have seen me do it."

"I'm your guardeen; I ought to know where the money is," said Mr. Fox, in a different tone, resorting to *finesse*.

"Very well, sir, I will give you a clew. I have put it into the hands of a gentleman in whom I have confidence, who will take care of it for me."

"What's the man's name?" demanded John Fox, frowning.

"That is my secret."

"You seem to forget that you are only a boy, Harry Vane."

"No, I don't, sir; but I remember that boys have some rights."

"You have rebelled against my lawful authority. Maria, what is it my duty to do with this boy?"

"Lock him up!" answered Mrs. Fox grimly.

"A good suggestion, Mrs. F. Imprisonment may change the boy's ideas. He may repent his base conduct."

"Mr. Fox," said Harry coolly, "why are you so anxious to get hold of my money?"

"Because you are too young to take care of it."

"You think it will not be safe in my hands, sir?"

"Yes, that is what I mean."

"I don't agree with you. Still, the money is not in my hands, as I have already told you."

"Where is it, then?" asked Fox suspiciously.

"I decline to tell you."

"John Fox, are you goin' to let that whipper-snapper get the best of you?" asked Mrs. Fox indignantly.

"Brace up and be a man."

"There ain't no need to tell me that, Maria. I'll show him his duty. So, boy, you defy me, eh?"

"No," answered Harry, "I am willing to submit to proper authority. But you are asking of me what you have no right to do."

"I guess I'm the proper judge of that," said John Fox, gathering courage from the stern expression of his wife's face. "I ask you once more, will you hand over that money?"

"I would prefer not to, Mr. Fox."

"That's no answer. Will you, or will you not?"

"If you put it that way, I will not."

Mrs. Fox jerked her head quickly, and glared at Harry with an expression by no means amiable.

"What are you going to do about it, Mr. Fox?" she asked.

"What would you do, Maria?" returned her husband, apparently undecided.

"I think it a case where a horsewhip should come into play."

Mr. Fox glanced at his ward. On his boyish face he saw a look of stern determination which led him to hesitate.

"It may come to that," he said, "but I'll try somethin' else fu'st. Joel, get a candle."

Joel obeyed.

"Now, young man," said Fox, in a tone of authority,

“go up to your chamber, and stay there till you’re ready to obey orders.”

Harry hesitated a moment, then took the candle quietly and went upstairs. Mr. Fox was relieved, for he was a little apprehensive that his ward would prove rebellious and decline to obey.

“You see, Maria,” he said triumphantly, after Harry had left the room. “I’ve conquered him.”

“You haven’t got the money!” rejoined Mrs. Fox dryly.

John Fox stole up after his ward, and Harry heard the door bolted on the outside.

He was a prisoner.

CHAPTER XIII

HARRY ESCAPES

IF Mr. Fox had been wiser, it would have occurred to him that it would be more prudent to wait till he had actually received the appointment of guardian, before he pushed his ward to extremity. But he was of a bullying disposition, and had a good deal of faith in his ability to manage boys. Harry was inferior to him in size and physical strength, and he felt sure he could subject him to his authority in time. He didn’t know the boy with whom he had to deal. Our hero was not difficult to manage by an appeal to his reason, but his spirit rose indignantly when anyone attempted to bully or browbeat him.

When he heard the bolt slide in the lock, he said to himself: “Mr. Fox and I can never agree. He has not yet been appointed my guardian, and he never will receive the appointment. I have the right to choose for myself, as Mr. Howard told me, and I mean to exercise it.”

Some of my readers may, perhaps, picture Harry as forcing open the door of his chamber, and rushing from the house, breathing loud defiance as he went. But he was a sensible boy, and meditated nothing of the kind.

"I can wait till morning," he reflected. "I don't think I shall be here twenty hours hence, but I mean to get a good night's sleep. It will be time enough to decide in the morning what I will do."

So, in spite of his imprisonment, Harry enjoyed a comfortable night's sleep, and was awakened in the morning by hearing his door opened.

Mr. Fox entered, and sat down on a chair by the bed.

"Good-morning, sir," said Harry composedly. "I hope you had a good night's rest."

"I say, boy, you've got cheek," remarked Fox, puzzled. "You are talkin' as if nothin' had happened."

"Nothing has happened to prevent my being polite, Mr. Fox."

"Much you care about my night's rest! Ef I had acted as bad as you, I couldn't have slept a wink."

"I slept very well, thank you, Mr. Fox."

"I didn't ask," snapped Fox, "and I don't care. What I want to know is, have you made up your mind to do as I told you last night?"

"About the money?"

"Sartain, about the money."

"I prefer to keep it in my own possession, if that is what you want to know."

"So you ain't subdued yet! I guess I'll have to keep you here a little longer."

"Then be kind enough to send me up some breakfast."

"You don't deserve none."

"Still, as I am paying my board, I shall object to payin' unless I get my meals regularly."

This consideration weighed with John Fox, and he sent

Joel up with a cup of coffee and some dry bread, five minutes later.

"Don't let him get out, and bolt the door after you, Joel," said his mother.

"Here's your breakfast, Harry," said Joel, his speckled face overspread with a grin.

"Thank you, Joel. Didn't you have anything better than that?"

"Yes, we had sassiges and pertaters, but dad and mam are awful mad with you, and mam says this is good enough for you."

"It will keep me from starving, at least," and Harry began to dispose of his meager meal.

"I say, Harry, you'd better give in. The old man is bound to make you."

"The old man has undertaken a large job, Joel," said Harry quietly.

"You don't mean to say you'll stick it out?"

"I think I shall."

"You've got spunk!" said Joel admiringly.

"Thank you, Joel; so I have when I know I am right."

"S'pose dad should keep you here a month?"

"I don't think he will. By the way, Joel, come up here about the middle of the forenoon; I want to say a few words to you in private."

"All right, I'll come. I must go down now."

"What did he say, Joel?" asked Mrs. Fox, as her son and heir descended the stairs.

"He asked if that was all we had for breakfast, mam."

"Turned up his nose at the breakfast, hey? It's more'n he deserves after such goin's on."

"I wonder what he wants to see me about?" said Joel, to himself.

Joel made a pretty shrewd guess, and resolved, by all means, to keep the appointment.

He was anxious to get his father out of the way, but

John Fox was unusually deliberate in his motions. Finally, about half-past nine, he left the house for the village. Mrs. Fox went in and out about her work as usual. She was somewhat surprised to find Joel remaining in the house contrary to his custom.

"What makes you hang round the house, Joel?" she asked.

"I've got a little headache, mam," answered Joel, drawing down the corners of his mouth.

"Shall I mix you some camomile tea, Joel?"

"No," answered Joel, hastily, for he remembered very well the bitter taste of this, his mother's sovereign remedy.

"I guess it'll go off bimeby."

Presently his mother said: "Joel, if you'll stay and mind the house, I'll run over to Mrs. Bean's and borrow some sugar; I never thought to ask your father to get some. If you was well, I'd ask you to go up to the store."

"I'll stay and mind the house, mam," said Joel, with avidity.

His mother put on her bonnet, and started across a field to her nearest neighbor's.

"Now's my time," thought Joel. "Mam's sure to get to talkin' with Mrs. Bean, and stay half an hour or more."

He ran up the garret stairs, and drew the bolt that held Harry captive.

"Well, Harry, I've come," he said. "You wanted me to come, you know."

"Yes, Joel."

"Have you got anything to say to me?" said Joel suggestively.

"Yes, Joel, I want you to let me out of this place."

"Oh, gracious!" exclaimed Joel, in apparent dismay.

"Dad would give me the wu'st kind of a lickin'."

"Would he know how I got out?" asked Harry.

"I don't know. What are you willing to give?"

Harry saw that it was merely a matter of bargaining,

and finally prevailed upon Joel to release him for a five-dollar bill. Of course, more was demanded, but, on the whole, Joel was satisfied with the terms finally agreed upon.

"I want the money now," said Joel.

"How do I know that you will do as you have agreed?"

"Give me the money, and I'll tell you."

Harry passed over the bank bill, and Joel said:

"Dad's gone to the village, and mam's gone over to Mrs. Bean's. All you've got to do is to go downstairs, and walk out."

Harry was by no means slow to take the hint.

"Good-by, Joel," he said, extending his hand; "I won't forget the favor you've done me."

"Ain't you comin' back?"

"Not at present. I find that your father and I will never agree, and I prefer to go away somewhere and face the world by myself."

"I don't know what dad'll say. There'll be an awful fuss. Just give me a box on the ear, won't you?"

"What for?"

"I'll tell dad you gave me an awful clip on the side of the head, and ran off, though I tried to stop you."

"All right," said Harry, laughing.

He gave Joel the required box on the ear, tripped him up, laying him gently on his back on the landing, and then, with a friendly "good-by," he ran down the stairs, and before Mrs. Fox returned from her call was a mile away.

She found Joel wiping his eyes.

"What's the matter, Joel?" she asked. "Is your headache wuss?"

"Yes, ma, and that isn't the wu'st of it."

"What's happened? Tell me, quick!"

"That boy, Harry, called me upstairs, and got me to open the door. Then he gave me an almighty clip on the side of my head that almost stunned me, then he knocked

me over, and ran out of the house as fast as he could run—my head aches awful!”

“The owdacious young ruffian!” ejaculated Mrs. Fox. “To beat my poor, dear Joel so! Never mind, Joel, dear, I’ll give you a piece of pie and some cake. As for that boy, he’ll be hung some day, I reckon!”

After eating the cake and pie, which were luxuries in that frugal household, Joel said he felt better. He went out behind the house, and taking out the five-dollar note, surveyed it with great satisfaction.

CHAPTER XIV

AN EXCITING CHASE

WHEN John Fox went to the village he usually stopped first at the tavern, and invested ten cents in a glass of whisky. Though economical to the verge of meanness, he generally indulged himself once a day or more in this way. But for his love of money, he would have gratified his taste oftener. So, in this instance, his avarice served him a good turn, and prevented his becoming a drunkard.

He had a little business in the village, but called, first, as usual, at the tavern. Here he met two or three of his cronies.

“Folks say you’ve got a new boarder, Fox,” said Bill Latimer, as he laid down his glass on the counter.

“Yes,” answered Fox, complacently. “I’m his guard-deen.”

“He’s the boy that saved the train, ain’t he?” asked Latimer.

“Yes, that’s he.”

“Folks say he got a pile of money for doing it.”

“He got a pretty stiff sum,” answered Fox cautiously.

“How much, now?”

"What do you say to two hundred dollars?"

"I'd save ten trains for that money. Do you keep his money?"

"Yes."

"How much property did his father leave him?"

"The estate hasn't been settled yet," said Fox, who knew how to keep his own counsel. "I can't say how much money there is."

"How did he happen to apply to you?" asked Eben Bond curiously.

"There's a sort of relationship between us, Eben."

"Is he easy to manage?" asked John Blake.

"Well, some folks might find trouble with him," said Fox, complacently. "The fact is, gentlemen, I don't mind telling you that he's been tryin' to buck agin' his guardeen a'ready. Where do you think I left him?" continued Fox, chuckling.

"Where?"

"Up in the attic, locked up in his chamber. I'm goin' to feed him on bread and water a while, just to show him what sort of a man John Fox is."

A grin overspread the face of Eben Bond, who had just looked out of the front window.

"So you left him in the attic, hey?" he said, waggishly.

"Yes, I did. Do you mean to say I didn't?"

"I'll bet you a quarter he isn't there now."

"I know he is, Eben Bond. Seems to me you're making a fool of yourself."

"Maybe I am, but I'm willin' to bet he isn't there now."

"What makes you say that?" asked Fox suspiciously.

"Oh, I'm foolin'. It don't make any difference what I say," returned Eben, with a comical leer.

"You jest tell me what you mean, Eben Bond!" said John Fox, provoked.

"I mean that I saw that boy of yours—I don't know his name—go by the tavern only two minutes since."

"Is that true?" gasped Fox.

"True as gospel! I reckon he's more'n a match for his guardeen; hey, boys?"

"Where did he go? In what direction?" demanded Fox, eagerly.

"Down toward the river."

"There ain't no trick about it?" asked Fox.

"Ask Sam Wallace—he must have met him."

Sam Wallace, a stout young man, had just entered the room.

"Did you meet my new boy, Sam?" asked Fox, turning to the newcomer.

"Yes, I met him down the road a piece; he seemed in an awful hurry."

"He's running away," Fox said to himself, in dismay. "How in the world did he get out?"

He ran up the road, gazing anxiously on this side and on that, hoping to come upon the runaway. One thing was favorable; it was a straight road with no roads opening out of it for at least a mile beyond the tavern. It led by the river at a point half a mile on.

"I'll catch him yet. He can't escape me!" Fox reflected, his courage beginning to return. "When I get hold of him I'll handle him pretty rough. He'll find he can't cut any of his didos on me."

"Have you seen a boy up the road?" he asked of Georgie Foster, a small boy, whom he met.

"Yes," answered Georgie carelessly.

"Who was it?"

"It's the boy that's livin' at your house—I don't know his name."

"Thank you, Georgie! That's a nice boy. I'll give you a cent some time."

"Hadn't you better give it to me now?" asked Georgie shrewdly.

"I haven't got any now. Where did he go?"

"I guess he went down to the river."

John Fox pushed on breathless, and a minute later came in sight of the fugitive.

Harry had sobered down to a walk, thinking himself no longer in danger. If Mr. Fox had been wise enough to keep silent till he had come within a few rods he might have caught him easily, but excitement and anger were too much for prudence, and he called out, angrily: "Just wait till I get hold of you, you young villain! I'll give you a lesson."

Harry turned quickly and saw the enemy close upon him.

That was enough. He set out on what the boys call a dead run, though he hardly knew in what direction to look for a refuge. But through the trees at the west side of the road he caught sight of something that put new hope into his heart. It was a boat, floating within three feet of shore. In it sat a boy of about his own age. It was Willie Foster, a brother of Georgie.

There was no time for ceremony. Harry sprang into the boat, and, seizing an idle oar, pushed out into the river.

The owner of the boat, who had been thoughtfully gazing into the water, looked up in surprise.

"Well, that's cool!" he ejaculated.

"I beg your pardon," said Harry, still plying the oar; "I couldn't help it; Mr. Fox is after me."

"What's he after you for?"

"I'll tell you presently. There he is!"

John Fox, by this time, stood on the river bank shaking his fist, with a discomfited expression at his intended victim.

"Come back here!" he shouted.

"Thank you, I would rather not," answered Harry, still increasing the distance between himself and his guardian.

"You, Willie Foster, row the boat back!" bawled John Fox.

"Is your name Willie Foster?" asked Harry, turning to his companion, who was looking with a puzzled expression, from one to the other.

"Yes."

"Then, Willie, if you will help me row over to the other side of the river and set me off there, I'll give you a dollar."

"I'll do it," said Willie, seizing the other oar, "but you needn't give me any money."

To his intense disgust, Fox saw the boat, propelled by the two boys, leaping forward energetically, while he stood helplessly on the bank.

The other bank was half a mile away, and could not be reached except by a bridge a considerable distance away. The two boys said little until the trip was accomplished.

"I hope you won't get into any trouble with Mr. Fox," said Harry, as they drew near the bank.

"I don't care for old Fox, and father doesn't like him, either. Why are you running away?"

Harry told him in a few words.

As he got out of the boat he pressed a dollar into Willie's reluctant hand.

"Don't be afraid! I've got plenty more!" said Harry. "Now, which way had I better go?"

"Take that footpath. It will lead to Medfield. There you can take the cars."

"Good-by, Willie; and thank you."

Willie didn't row back immediately. John Fox was lying in wait on the other side, and he didn't care to meet him.

CHAPTER XV

THE MAGICIAN OF MADAGASCAR

HARRY pushed on till he reached a highway. He felt in doubt as to where it might lead him, but followed it at a venture. He wondered whether John Fox would pursue him, and from time to time looked back to make sure that his guardian was not on his trail. In about three hours he found himself eight miles away. Then, for the first time, he felt that it might be safe to stop and rest.

He resumed his walk, but had not gone a quarter of a mile when he heard the noise of wheels.

"Shall I give you a lift?" said the driver of the team.

Looking up, he saw that it was a covered wagon with four wheels, such as is often to be met with in New England towns. The man who held the reins was of large frame and portly, with dark hair and whiskers. He might be about forty-five years of age.

"Thank you, sir," said Harry. "I do prefer it at the present moment, for I am getting tired."

"I'm sorry I didn't overtake you before."

"Perhaps your horse isn't sorry."

"Oh! he won't mind your weight. When you get to my weight it will make a difference. Where are you bound, if you don't mind my being inquisitive?"

"I don't know," answered Harry doubtfully.

"Don't know! Well, that is curious. Don't you live round here?"

"No; my home is a hundred miles away."

"You ain't goin' West to kill Indians, are you?"

"No; I'm willing the Indians should live. The fact is, I'm seeking my fortune, as they say."

"Well, you ought to find it," returned the other, after

a deliberate survey of his young companion. "You look healthy and strong. Have you got any money?"

"A little. My father died lately and left me three hundred dollars. He recommended to me as guardian a man named John Fox, living eight miles back. Well, I have tried Mr. Fox, and I prefer to be my own guardian."

"I've heard of John Fox. He's fox by name, and fox by nature. So you and he didn't hitch horses?"

"Not at all."

"When did you leave him?"

"This morning. I don't know but I may say that I am running away from him, as I left without his knowledge, but as he is not yet my legal guardian, I don't consider that he has any right to interfere with me."

"Tell me what sort of a time you had with him."

Upon this Harry gave a graphic account of his experiences, as already detailed. His companion seemed very much amused and laughed repeatedly.

"That's very clever," he said. "You outwitted the old man nicely. There'll be a circus when they find out how you got away."

"I don't believe they will find out. Joel will be cunning enough to invent some story."

"I should like to be there to see how they cut up."

"I wouldn't," said Harry. "I don't care to set eyes on any of the family again. There!" he suddenly exclaimed. "I've forgotten something."

"What is it?"

"I'm owing Mr. Fox for board."

"How long have you been with him?"

"About two days."

"Then it can't be much."

"I'll mail a letter from the first place that is far enough off to be safe and inclose five dollars."

"That's too much for two days."

"I will pay the week's board. I won't give him any

reason to charge me with dishonesty. Then we shall be even and I needn't think of him again."

"Perhaps you are right. You haven't told me your name yet."

"My name is Harry Vane."

"A good name. Who do you think I am?"

"You may be General Miles," answered Harry, smiling.

"I am not, to the best of my knowledge. I am the Magician of Madagascar. You may have heard of me."

"I don't think I have," said Harry, puzzled.

The magician looked slightly disconcerted.

"I have been before the public for many years," he said.

"I give magical entertainments, and, in the course of the last twenty years, have traveled all over the continent."

"You see," explained Harry, apologetically, "I have always lived in a small country town, where there were few amusements, and so I know very little of such things. I never saw a magical entertainment in my life."

"Didn't you, indeed? Then you shall see me perform to-night. I am to give a magical soir  e in Conway, the town we are coming to."

"I should like it very much, Mr.——" and Harry paused in doubt.

"I am called Prof. Hemenway—Hiram Hemenway," said the magician. "My parents tried to make a farmer of me. But it was of no use. The public needed me and I became what you see."

"Do you like your business?" asked Harry curiously.

"Why shouldn't I? I have a chance to travel. The people appreciate my efforts, and reward me generously. I've salted down a few thousands, I can assure you."

"I am very glad to hear it, Prof. Hemenway."

"Money isn't to be despised, my young friend, and I earn it in a pleasant way."

By a fortunate accident Harry happened to turn in his seat and look through a small window in the back part of

the wagon. What he saw startled him. In a buggy, ten rods back, he recognized his late guardian and Joel. They were making good speed, and were doubtless in pursuit of him.

Harry quickly imparted his discovery to his companion.

"Don't let him capture me!" he said.

"I should like to see him do it," responded the professor. "Get into the back part of the wagon and crouch down."

Harry did as directed.

"I say, stranger," said Fox, as he drew up alongside.

"All right, my friend, go ahead and say it!"

"A boy ran away from me this morning. Perhaps you have seen him?"

"Perhaps so. Is he your son?"

"No, I'm his guardeen."

"Why did he run away? Did you ill treat him?"

"Certainly not. He wouldn't obey me."

"I saw a boy about a mile back," said the magician, reflectively, "a stout, good-looking lad, dark-brown hair, and a pleasant expression; didn't look at all like you."

"Why should he? Didn't I say he was not my son?"

"I chatted with him a while. He said he was leaving a man who claimed to be his guardian, but wasn't."

"The young liar!" ejaculated Fox, wrathfully.

"Is he in your wagon?" put in Joel, sharply.

"If he were you'd see him, wouldn't you?"

"In behind you?"

"Yes, are you kidnaping him?" demanded Fox.

"There is a boy in the back of my wagon," said the magician coolly. "If you ain't afraid of smallpox, you may see him. Which shall it be, you or the boy?"

A pallid hue overspread the face of John Fox, which was increased by an agonizing moan, which appeared to proceed from behind the magician.

"Turn the horse, Joe!" was all he said.

He whipped up his horse without a word and did not pull up for half a mile.

"You can come out now, Harry," said the professor, with a queer smile. "I am a ventriloquist, and that moan did the business."

CHAPTER XVI

A NEW ENGAGEMENT

HARRY was not a little relieved at his narrow escape. He did not propose to be taken captive without stout resistance, but in a struggle with Mr. Fox and Joel, he felt that he would be at a disadvantage.

"I am much obliged to you for saving me, Prof. Hemenway," he said.

"You are quite welcome. So you didn't like old Fox?"

"Not much."

"He doesn't appear to like you any better."

"There isn't much love lost between us."

"How do you like the boy?"

"He served me a good turn—for five dollars—but he would help capture me for the same money, or less."

"You thanked me for saving you from capture, my lad," continued the magician. "Well, I had an object in it—a selfish object."

Harry looked puzzled.

"It struck me that I needed a boy about your size and character to sell tickets, take money and help me on the stage. How do you like the idea?"

"I like it," answered Harry, "but there is one objection."

"What is that?"

"I don't come from Madagascar," responded Harry. Prof. Hemenway laughed.

"You've been as near there as I have," he said. "Did you really think I came from Madagascar?"

"You look more as if you came from Maine, sir."

"You've hit it! I was raised twenty-five miles from Portland, on a farm. But it would never do to put that on the bills. However, to come to business. I had a young man traveling with me, who wasn't suited to the business. He was a dry-goods clerk when I took him and is better adapted to that business than to mine. He left me last week. How much do you consider your time worth?"

"Just at present it isn't worth much. If you will pay my traveling expenses, that will satisfy me."

"I will do better than that. I will give you five dollars a week besides, if business is good."

"Thank you, sir. I think I shall enjoy traveling."

As they approached the village of Conway, Harry's attention was drawn to a variety of posters setting forth, in mammoth letters, that the world-renowned Magician of Madagascar would give a magical *soirée* at the Town Hall in the evening. Tickets, fifteen cents; children under twelve years, ten cents. The posters, furthermore, attracted attention by a large figure of the professor, dressed in bizarre style, performing one of his tricks.

"That draws attention," observed the professor, "particularly among the boys. I think I shall have a hall full this evening. An audience of three hundred will pay very well. I do most of my traveling in this wagon and at hotels I get the usual professional reduction."

"Did it take you long to learn the business?"

"I have been learning all along. Every now and then I add a new trick. I will teach you some."

"I might leave you and set up on my own hook when I have learned," suggested Harry, with a smile.

"It will be some time before you look old enough for a magician. When you are I'll give you my blessing and send you out."

Meanwhile they had been jogging along, and were already in the main street of Conway. The professor drew up in front of the village hotel, and a groom came forward and took his horse.

"Wait a minute," said the professor. "Harry, you can help me take my implements out of the wagon."

These "implements" were of a heterogeneous character, but all would come in use in the evening. A number of boys watched their transfer with awe and curiosity.

"What's them?" Harry heard one ask another.

"Those?" said the professor, in an impressive tone, turning toward the boys. "Those are paraphernalia!"

The boys looked more awestruck than ever. All resolved to go to the Town Hall that evening, and get a nearer view of the articles which had such a grand name.

After a while Harry came downstairs from the room assigned him, and stood on the piazza.

One of the boys drew near him cautiously.

"Are you the magician's son?" he asked.

"No," answered Harry, smiling.

"Do you come from Madagascar?"

"I have not been there recently."

"Are all the people there magicians?"

"Not quite all."

This information was rather scanty, but it was whispered about among the boys, the first boy boasting that he had a talk with the young magician.

Directly after supper Harry went with his employer to assist in preparing the stage for the evening performance. Though a novice, he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of his employer, who congratulated himself on having secured so efficient an assistant. Half an hour before the performance he stationed himself in the entry, provided with tickets. He sat at a small table and received the crowd. Though new to the business, he managed to make

change rapidly. He found his position one in which he had a chance to study human nature.

An old lady entered with a brutish-looking boy as large as Harry.

"Gimme a whole ticket and a half," she said, offering a quarter.

"Who is the half ticket for?" asked Harry.

"For my grandson here. Did you think 'twas for me?" demanded the old lady aggressively.

"Is your grandson under twelve?" asked Harry.

"Can't you let him in for ten cents?"

"I am sorry, but it's contrary to orders."

"It's real mean, I vow 'tis! Timothy, I guess you'll have to go home."

"No, I won't!" said the boy. "If anybody's goin' home, it ought to be you, granny. What does an old woman like you want to see the show for, anyway?"

This proposal, however, did not suit the grandmother.

"I'll give you the extra five cents to-morrer," she said.

"That won't do, madam. Please stand aside, as others are waiting."

Finally, after a great deal of grumbling, the old lady managed to discover a three-cent piece and two pennies, which she tendered to the young ticket seller, and this removed all difficulties. But Timothy, who was provoked at Harry's inflexible refusal to let him in for a half ticket, launched a farewell shot at the young financial agent.

"I'd lick you for a cent!" he said, scowling.

"I don't allow any boy under twelve to lick me."

This answer provoked a laugh among the crowd in the entry, and Timothy, reddening with mortification, slunk in after his grandmother.

CHAPTER XVII

HARRY IN A NEW RÔLE

DURING the evening Harry was called upon to assist the professor in some of his tricks. Some boys would have been embarrassed upon finding themselves objects of general attention, but Harry was by temperament cool and self-possessed.

"I wish you were a singer," said the professor, when they were standing behind the screen.

"Why?" asked Harry.

"Because the audience sometimes gets impatient during the intermission. If I could put you on for a song, it would help quiet them."

"I can sing a little," said Harry modestly.

"What can you sing?"

"How would 'The Last Rose of Summer' do?"

"Capitally. Can you sing it?"

"I can try."

"You are sure you won't break down? That would make a bad impression."

"I can promise you I won't break down, sir."

"Wait, then, till I announce you."

The professor came from behind the screen, and, addressing the audience, said: "Ladies and gentlemen, lest you should find the necessary intermission tedious, I am happy to announce that the young vocalist, Master Harry Vane, has kindly consented to favor you with one of his popular melodies. He has selected, by request, 'The Last Rose of Summer.'"

Harry could hardly refrain from laughing when he heard this introduction.

"One would think I was a well-known singer."

He came forward, and, standing before the audience, with his face a little flushed, made a graceful bow. He had not sung through two lines before the professor, who waited the result with some curiosity and some anxiety, found that he could sing. His voice was high, clear and musical, and his rendition was absolutely correct. The fact was, Harry had taken lessons in a singing school at home, and had practiced privately also.

The song was listened to with earnest attention, and evident enjoyment by all. When the last strain died away, and Harry made his farewell bow, there was an enthusiastic burst of applause, emphasized by the clapping of hands and the stamping of feet.

"You did yourself proud, my boy!" said the gratified professor. "They want you on again."

This seemed evident from the noise.

"Can't you sing something else?"

"Very well, sir."

Harry had never previously sung a solo before an audience and although he had felt that he could, he was glad to find that he had not overestimated his powers.

He sang a song very popular at that time, the words and air of which were familiar to all. While it did not afford him so good a chance to show his musical capacity, it was received with much greater favor than the first song.

There was a perfect whirlwind of applause and a third song was called for.

"I would rather not sing again, professor," said Harry.

"You needn't. They would keep you singing all the evening if you would allow it. Better leave off when they are unsatisfied."

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "Master Vane thanks you for your kind applause, but he makes it an unvarying rule never to sing but two songs in an evening. He never broke over that rule but once, and that was at the special request of the governor-general of Canada. I shall

now have the pleasure of performing, for your amusement, one of my most popular experiments."

"I wonder when I sang before the governor-general of Canada?" thought Harry, amused. "My new employer seems to be a man of vivid imagination."

When he asked the professor, after they returned to the hotel, the magician answered: "My dear boy, we can't get along without a little humbug. The people like it, and if you don't indulge in it, you can't keep up with your competitors."

"But suppose that they find out that I was never in Canada?"

"How are they going to find out? Even if they did, they would only laugh. You know that Barnum was a colossal humbug all his life, but everybody liked him, and he never failed to please the people. Well, you have pleased the people, and that is the main point. By Jove! my boy, you've got a lovely voice."

"I am glad you think so, sir."

"You will prove a very valuable addition to my entertainment. I mean to show my appreciation, too. How much did I agree to give you?"

"Five dollars a week if business was good."

"It's bound to be good. I'll raise your wages to ten dollars a week, if you'll agree to sing one song, and two, if called for, at each of my evening entertainments."

"I'll do it, sir," said Harry promptly. "It's a surprise to me, though, to find my voice so valuable to me."

"It's a popular gift, my boy; and all popular gifts are valuable. When I get my new bill printed, I must have your name on it."

They left Conway about noon the next day. During the forenoon, Harry, in walking through the village street, found himself an object of attention. Among others, he met the boy whom he refused to admit for half price.

"Good-morning," said Harry, smiling.

"Mornin'!" answered the young rustic. "Say, I wish I could sing like you?"

"Perhaps you could if you tried."

"No, I couldn't. Granny says I've got a voice like a frog."

"Not so bad as that, I am sure."

"My voice is as good as hers, anyway. When did you sing before that bigbug the old man told of?"

"You must ask him," said Harry, smiling.

"Well, I wish I could sing like you. There's a gal in the village I'm kinder shinin' up to. I heard her say last night she wished she knowed you."

"Give her my regards, please," said Harry. "If she likes music you might learn to play on something, and that might help you win her favor."

"You're a good fellow, after all. Last night I felt like lickin' you."

"It's better to be friends. What's your name?"

"Timothy Tompkins."

"Then shake hands, Timothy. I wish you good luck with your girl, and shall be glad to meet you again."

"I think I shall be getting self-conceited before long," thought Harry; "I never expected to become a public singer. I wonder what my 'guardeen' would have said, if he had been in the audience last evening."

The Foxes, however, were destined to hear of Harry's success. The *Conway Citizen* was taken in the family, and, much to their astonishment, this was what they read in the next number:

"The magical entertainment of Prof. Hemenway, on Thursday evening, was even more successful than usual. He has had the good fortune to secure the services of a young vocalist named Harry Vane, who charmed both young and old by two popular selections. His voice and execution are admirable, and we predict for him a brilliant future."

Mr. Fox read this aloud in evident wonder.

"Did you ever hear the like?" he said.

"Who'd have thought it?" chimed in Mrs. Fox.

"I wonder if he gets good pay," said Joel. "I say, dad, I believe that old feller in the wagon was the magician, and Harry was in behind. That was all a blind about the smallpox."

"Shouldn't wonder if you were right, Joel," said his father. "I wish I'd knowed the boy could sing so well. I'd have got up a concert. I might have made it pay."

"Shall you try to get him back, dad?"

"It's no use now," said John Fox, shaking his head.

CHAPTER XVIII

A LIBERAL OFFER

THEN commenced what the professor called a professional tour. By day they traveled in the wagon, carrying their paraphernalia with them, stopping at the principal towns, and giving evening entertainments. At many of these places the magician was well known, and his tricks were not new. But he had an attraction in his young assistant, who was advertised as the "celebrated young vocalist, whose songs are everywhere received with admiring applause."

Indeed, this was very near the truth. Harry was really a fine singer, and his fresh, attractive face, and manly appearance won him a welcome in all the towns on their route. Sometimes a young girl in the audience threw him a bouquet. This made him blush and smile, and the donor felt rewarded.

Where was it going to end? Was he to continue in the service of the professor, and in time become himself a ma-

gician and a traveling celebrity? Harry was not sure about it. He saw that it would pay him better than most kinds of business, and he also discovered that Prof. Hemenway was even better off than he had represented. Yet, he was not quite ready to select the same profession, but, being only sixteen, felt that he could afford to remain in it a while longer.

One day the professor gave him a surprise.

"Harry," he said, as they were jogging along a dusty road, "do you think you would like to travel?"

"I am traveling now," answered Harry, with a smile.

"True, but I don't mean that. Would you like to go on a long journey?"

"I should like nothing better," replied Harry promptly.

"I'll tell you what I have been thinking about. I recently read in some paper that a man in my line had made a trip to Australia, and reaped a rich harvest. Everywhere he was received with enthusiasm, and made as much money in one month as he would do here in four. Now, why shouldn't I go to Australia?"

Harry's eyes sparkled.

"It would be a fine thing to do," he said.

"Then you would be willing to accompany me?"

"I would thank you for taking me," answered the boy.

"Very well, then, Harry, we will consider it settled. I shall rely on you to help me by your singing there as you do here. As to your wages, I may be able to pay you more."

"Never mind about that, professor. It will cost you a good deal to get us there. I am perfectly willing to work for the same sum I do now, or even less."

"Then you leave that matter to me. I won't take advantage of your confidence, but you shall prosper if I do."

"How soon do you propose to go, professor?"

"As soon as possible. I shall ascertain when the first packet leaves Boston and take passage in her."

The professor's decision pleased Harry. He had been a good scholar in geography—indeed, it was his favorite study—and had, besides, read as many books of travel as he could lay his hands on. Often he had wondered whether it would ever be his fortune to see some of the distant countries of which he read with so much interest.

At last they reached Boston. They were to give two entertainments at a hall at the South End. It was the first large city in which Harry had sung, but he received a welcome no less cordial than that accorded to him in country towns.

They were staying at a modest hotel, comfortable, but not expensive. Harry was sitting in the reading room, when a servant brought in a card. It bore the rather remarkable name of

“DR. MENDELSSOHN BROWN.”

“A gentleman to see you, Mr. Vane,” said the servant.

Harry rose and surveyed the stranger in some surprise. He had long hair, of a reddish yellow, with an abundant beard of the same hue. His suit of worn black fitted him poorly, but Mr. Brown evidently was not a devotee of dress.

“Do I speak to Mr. Harry Vane, the young vocalist?” asked the stranger, with a deferential smile.

“That's my name,” answered our hero.

“You are alone?”

“Yes, sir,” said Harry, a little puzzled.

“It is well. I will come to business at once. You have probably heard of me, eh?”

“Probably I have, but I do not remember names well.”

“The name of Mendelssohn Brown is pretty well known, I flatter myself,” said the visitor complacently. “To be brief—I heard you sing last evening, and was much pleased with your vocal organ.”

Harry bowed.

"I am about to form a Juvenile Pinafore company, and would like to have you take the leading part. You would make an excellent *Admiral*. I propose to take my opera company all over the United States. I should pay you, as the star performer, twenty-five dollars a week."

Harry opened his eyes in amazement.

"Do you think me capable of singing in opera?"

"Yes, after being trained by your humble servant. What do you say?"

"I thank you for your flattering offer, Dr. Brown, but I don't feel at liberty to leave Prof. Hemenway."

The doctor frowned.

"Let me tell you, you stand in your own light, Mr. Vane," he said, impatiently. "There is some difference between a common juggler, like the Magician of Madagascar"—the doctor laughed ironically—"and a well-known musical director, who could make you famous. Does Hemenway pay you as much as I offer?"

"No, sir."

"I thought so. Then how can you hesitate?"

"We are about to make an Australian tour," answered Harry, "and, apart from all other considerations, I am glad to have a chance to travel."

"Then," said Dr. Brown, "I can only bid you good-morning. I think you are making a mistake."

"Perhaps, after I return from Australia, I may be ready to accept your offer."

"It will be too late," said the doctor gloomily.

"Twenty-five dollars a week is large pay," thought Harry, "but I don't believe I should ever get it. Dr. Brown doesn't look like a capitalist."

Half an hour later, Prof. Hemenway entered.

"Well, my boy," he said, "the die is cast! Next Saturday we sail from Long Wharf, bound for Australia."

"But, professor, I have just had an offer of twenty-five dollars a week to sing in Pinafore."

"And have accepted!" exclaimed the magician, in dismay.

"No; I respectfully declined. I would rather go with you."

"You shan't regret it, Harry!" said the professor.

"Thank you, professor; I am sure of that. What is the name of our vessel?"

"The *Nantucket*. It's a good, solid-looking craft, and I think it will bear us in safety to our destination."

CHAPTER XIX

THE PASSENGERS

THE *Nantucket*, Capt. Jabez Hill, master, was a large vessel, staunch and strong, and bore a good record, having been in service six years, and never having in that time met a serious disaster. It was a sailing vessel, and primarily intended to convey freight, but had accommodations for six passengers. Of these it had a full complement. Harry and the professor I name first.

Next came John Appleton, a business man from Melbourne. He was a plain, substantial-looking person, of perhaps forty-five. Next came Montgomery Clinton, from Brooklyn, a young man of twenty-four, foppishly attired, who wore an eye-glass and anxiously aped the London swell, though born within sight of Boston State House. Harry regarded him with considerable amusement, and, though he treated him with outward respect, mentally voted him very soft. First on the list was a tall, sallow, thin individual, with a melancholy countenance, who was persuaded that he had not long to live. He was from Pennsylvania. He carried with him in his trunk a large assortment of pills and liquid medicines, one or another of

which he took about once an hour. This gentleman's name was Marmaduke Timmins. Last came a tall, lean Yankee, the discoverer and proprietor of a valuable invention, which it was his purpose to introduce into Australia. Mr. Jonathan Stubbs, for this was his name, was by no means an undesirable addition to the little circle, and often excited a smile by his quaint and shrewd observations.

It was the third day at sea, when Harry, who had suffered but little from seasickness, came on deck, after a good dinner, and saw the dudish passenger, till now invisible, holding himself steady with an effort, and gazing sadly out upon the wild waste of waters.

"How do you feel, Mr. Clinton?" asked Harry.

"Horribly, Mr. Vane," answered Clinton, with a languid shudder. "I never thought it was such a bore, crossing the ocean, don't you know. I've a great idea of offering the captain a handsome sum to land me somewhere, I don't care much where."

"I don't think we shall go near any land, Mr. Clinton. I think you will have to make the best of it."

"There isn't any best, Mr. Vane. Really, I give you my word, it has taken away all my ambition. I don't even care for my looks. You won't believe it, but I haven't shaved since I came on board."

Harry surveyed the smooth, vacant countenance of his fellow passenger, but could not discover the stubby beard which it might have been expected to show.

"I look horrid, don't I?" drawled Clinton.

"I shouldn't know but you had shaved this morning."

"You are very kind, I'm sure," lisped the dude, "but I know I am a sight to behold. If there were any ladies on board, I should be mortified, I give you my word."

"I haven't shaved myself since I came aboard," said Harry gravely. "Would you notice it?"

"Well, no, I don't think I should," answered Clinton.

"Thank you," said Harry, appearing relieved, "but

perhaps that is because you have not your eyeglass with you."

"On my honor, your face looks very clean. You are only a boy, you know."

"How does it happen that you are making a sea voyage, Mr. Clinton?"

Montgomery Clinton heaved a deep sigh.

"You touch a tender chord, Mr. Vane," he replied.

"If I tell you it must be in strict confidence."

"You can depend on me."

"Then I don't mind telling you. It is a relief to confide in a friend. It is because my heart is broken."

"Indeed! May I ask how long it has been in that condition?" asked Harry, with commendable gravity.

"Ever since I met Blanche Devere at Saratoga. She's a daisy, Mr. Vane; if ever there was one. I got mashed on her directly."

"Did she return your affection, Mr. Clinton?"

"I think she did," said Clinton pensively. "She always smiled when she saw me. Wouldn't you regard that as encouraging?"

"It seems like it," answered Harry gravely, though he could imagine another reason for smiling.

"One day I proposed to Blanche. She hesitated and appeared agitated. Then she told me she had a cousin, a military officer, who was desperately in love with her, and had threatened to shoot anyone else who offered her attentions. She said she expected him the next day, and said she hoped no one would tell him of my attentions."

"What did you do, Mr. Clinton?"

"I left Saratoga that night, Mr. Vane," answered Clinton, sadly, "but my heart was broken."

Hearing a step behind him, Harry turned, and his eye rested on the melancholy countenance of Marmaduke Timmins, the chronic invalid.

"Good-morning, Mr. Timmins," said our hero. "I hope you stand the voyage well."

"I've had several new symptoms since I came on board," responded Mr. Timmins gloomily, "and I've made a dreadful discovery."

"What is it?" inquired Montgomery Clinton, in alarm.

"I find I've forgotten to bring my box of Remedial pills. I don't know what I shall do without them."

"I've got a box of Brandreth's pills downstairs," said Clinton. "You're welcome to a part of them, I'm sure."

"What can you be thinking of, young man? Do you think there's no difference between pills?"

"I'm sure I can't tell, don't you know?"

"Young man, you are sadly ignorant," said Timmins, severely. "I've got five other kinds of pills downstairs, for different maladies I am subject to, but none of them will take the place of Remedial pills."

"Will any of them cure seasickness?" asked the dude.

"I can give you a remedy for seasickness, Mr. Clinton," said Mr. Holdfast, the mate, who chanced to overhear the inquiry.

"What is it, Mr. Holdfast? I shall be really grateful, I assure you, if you can cure that beastly malady."

"Swallow a piece of raw, salt pork about an inch square," said the mate gravely, "and follow it up by a glass of sea water, taken at a gulp."

"That's horrid, awfully horrid!" gasped Clinton, shuddering, and looking very pale. "It actually makes me sick to think of it, don't you know," and he retreated to the cabin, with one hand pressed on his stomach.

"That young man's a fool!" said Mr. Timmins. "He knows no more of pills than a baby."

"Nor do I, Mr. Timmins," said Harry, smiling.

"I pity you, then. My life has been saved several times by pills."

"I'd rather live without them."

Marmaduke shook his head as he walked away.

"That man's a walking drugstore," said the mate, looking after him. "I'd rather go to Davy's locker, and be done with it, than fill myself up with pills and potions."

"You're looking chipper, my boy," said a newcomer, in a nasal voice. "Haven't been seasick, I guess."

Harry recognized the voice of the Yankee inventor, Mr. Jonathan Stubbs.

"No, sir; I have had very little trouble."

"I'm goin' to get up a cure for seasickness when I have time—a kind of a self-acting, automatic belt—I guess there's money in it."

"It would be a great blessing, Mr. Stubbs. Poor Mr. Clinton would no doubt be glad to buy it."

"Do you mean that languishin' creeter with an eyeglass and spindle legs? What are such fellows made for?"

"Rather for ornament than use," answered Harry.

The Yankee burst into a loud guffaw.

CHAPTER XX

A CLOUD IN THE SKY

THE voyage was to be a long one, and after a couple of weeks all had their sea legs on. But time dragged and something seemed necessary to break up the monotony.

"Harry," said the professor, "I have an idea."

"What is it, professor?"

"Suppose we give an exhibition for the benefit of our fellow passengers and the crew."

"Why do you say we, professor?"

"Because I shall want you to assist me."

"I am ready to do my part."

"Then I will speak to the captain."

The result was that on the first quiet day Prof. Hemenway and his assistant gave a matinée performance on the deck of the *Nantucket*, at which all who could possibly be spared were present. To some of the sailors it was a novelty, and the magician's mysterious tricks actually inspired some with the feeling that he was possessed of supernatural powers.

"Will you lend me your hat, Mr. Clinton?" he asked presently, of the dude.

"Certainly, professor," drawled the young man.

The professor took it, and tapped it.

"Are you sure there is nothing in it?" he asked.

"I am sure of it. Really, I don't carry things in my hat, don't you know?"

"What do you say to this, then?" and Prof. Hemenway drew out of the hat half a dozen onions, a couple of potatoes, and a ship biscuit.

"My dear sir, I think you are mistaken," he said. "I see you carry your lunch in your hat."

All present laughed at the horrified face of the dude.

"On my honor, I don't know how those horrid things came in my hat," he stammered.

"Are you fond of onions, Mr. Clinton?" asked Harry.

"I wouldn't eat one for—for a new suit of clothes!"

"Allow me to return your hat, Mr. Clinton," said the professor politely. "I suppose you want the vegetables, too. Here are the onions, and the rest."

"They are not mine, on my honor," said Clinton, very much embarrassed. "Here, my good man, can you make use of these?"

The sailor accepted the gift with a grin.

"Thank you kindly, sir," he said, "if so be as I ain't a robbin' you."

"I have no use for them, my good man. I never ate an onion in my life."

"Then I don't think you know what's good," said Mr.

Stubb. "An onion, let me tell you, is mighty good eatin', and healthy, too."

At the close of the magical entertainment, Harry sang by request, and no part of the performance was more popular. He received many congratulations.

"Really, Mr. Vane, you sing like a nightingale, don't you know," was the tribute of Clinton.

"Bless me!" said Mr. Timmins; "I was so absorbed in your song that I have forgotten to take my catarrh medicine."

"Thank you, sir; that is the best compliment I have received," returned Harry, with a smile.

Little has been said thus far of Capt. Hill, the chief officer of the *Nantucket*. He was a stout, red-faced seaman, nearing fifty years of age, and had been in service ever since he was fifteen. He was a thorough sailor, and fitted in every way but one to take charge of a ship bound to any part of the world. His one disqualification may be stated briefly—he had a passion for drink.

It was not immediately that this was found out. He took his meals with the passengers, but it was not then that he indulged his appetite. He kept a private store of liquors in his cabin, and had recourse to them when by himself, under the impression that he could keep it a secret. But intemperance, like murder, will out.

Harry and the professor were standing by the rail looking out to sea, one day, when a thick voice greeted them, "Good-morn'n', gentlemen," this address being followed by a hiccough.

Both turned quickly, and exchanged a significant glance when they recognized the captain.

"Yes," answered Prof. Hemenway, "it is indeed a fine morning."

"That's what I shay," responded the captain, in a combative tone, "and what I shay I mean."

Prof. Hemenway answered him in a conciliatory way,

and shortly after the captain resumed his march, plainly unsteady on his legs.

"I am sorry to see this, Harry," said the professor.

"Yes, sir; it is a pity any gentleman should drink too much."

"Yes, but that isn't all," said the professor earnestly; "it is a pity, of course, that Capt. Hill should so sin against his own health, but we must consider, furthermore, that he has our lives under his control."

"He seems to understand his business," said Harry.

"Granted; but no man is fit to manage a vessel when he allows liquor to rob him of his senses. I wish I had known beforehand the captain's infirmity."

"Suppose you had, sir?"

"I wouldn't have trusted myself on board the *Nantucket*, you may be sure of that."

This happened when they were a week out. It must be stated that the captain did not, for a long time, expose himself to observation again when under the influence of his potations. Yet that he still continued them was evident enough from his appearance.

The next occasion on which the captain displayed his infirmity was rather a laughable one. He came up from the cabin about three o'clock in the afternoon so full that he was forced to stagger as he walked. Directly in front of him the young dude, Montgomery Clinton, was pacing the deck, carrying in his hand a rattan cane such as he used on shore. As he overhauled him, Capt. Hill, with the instinct of a drunken man, locked arms with the young man, and forced him to promenade in his company, talking rather incoherently meanwhile. Clinton's look of distress and perplexity caused Harry nearly to explode with laughter.

Finally there came a disaster. A lurch of the vessel proved too much for the captain, who, in losing his equilibrium, also upset Clinton, and the two rolled down under one of the ship's boats.

Montgomery Clinton picked himself up and hurriedly betook himself to his cabin, fearing that he might fall again into the clutches of his unwelcome companion. The captain was helped to his feet by the mate, and was persuaded also to go downstairs.

"The captain was pretty well slewed, professor," said Mr. Stubbs, who chanced to be on deck at the time.

"It looks like it," answered Prof. Hemenway gravely.

"If he does that often it'll be a bad lookout for us."

"Just what I am thinking, Mr. Stubbs."

"I've a great mind to speak to Capt. Hill about it. He ought to have his duty set before him."

"If you don't object, it may be advisable to do so, Mr. Stubbs."

Jonathan Stubbs, who was a very free-spoken person, took an early occasion to carry out his plan, but with ill success. Capt. Hill became furiously angry, vowed that Stubbs had insulted him; that he had never drunk too much in his life, and threatened to put him in irons if he repeated the offense.

Mr. Stubbs was not frightened, but saw that further remonstrance would be unavailing. He shrugged his shoulders and walked away.

"There's no arguing with a fool or a drunkard," he said to the professor.

CHAPTER XXI

THE YOUNG SAILOR

THE crew of the *Nantucket* consisted of twelve sailors and a boy, not counting the officers. This boy was about Harry's age, but an inch or two shorter, and with great breadth of shoulders. He had a good-natured face, and

was a general favorite on board. He came from New Hampshire and he was known as Jack.

It was natural that Harry, as the only other boy on board, should be attracted to Jack. He took an opportunity when Jack was off duty to chat with him.

"How long have you been a sailor, Jack?" he asked.

"Three years; I first went to sea when I was thirteen."

"How did you happen to go in the first place?"

"Well, you see, Mr. Vane——"

"Call me Harry. I am only a boy, like yourself."

"So I will, if you don't mind. Well, Harry, I may say, to begin with, that I always liked the water. I was born in a little village bordering on Lake Winnipiseogee, and was out on the lake whenever I could get the chance, either in a rowboat or sailboat. I felt as much at home on the water as on the land. Still, I never should have gone to sea but for my stepfather."

"Then you have a stepfather?"

"Yes. My father died when I was ten, leaving my mother a little farm and a comfortable house. I was a young boy, and it is hard for a woman to carry on a farm. A man came into town and started in some small business. Pretty soon he fixed his eyes on our farm, and, finding that mother owned it clear, he got to coming round pretty often. I never liked him. I didn't mistrust anything till one day mother called me and said she had something important to say to me.

"'Jack,' she said, 'what do you think of Mr. Bannock?'

"'I don't think much of him,' I answered; 'what makes him come here so often?'

"'He's going to come here oftener,' she said.

"'What's that for?' I asked, still not dreaming of the truth. But it all came out when she said: 'He is to be your father, Jack. I have promised to marry him.'

"'You may marry him,' I answered hotly, 'but he will

be no father of mine. My father lies in the churchyard. I wish he were alive again.'

" 'So do I, Jack,' said mother, wiping her eyes.

" 'What makes you marry again, mother?' I asked.

" 'I need some one to look after me and the farm, Jack,' said mother. 'A woman has a hard lot when she is alone.'

" 'Wait till I am old enough, and I will take care of the farm, mother. Don't marry that man!' I pleaded. 'What does he know of farming, anyway. He keeps a store.'

" 'His father was a farmer, and he was brought up on a farm,' answered mother.

" Well, I teased and teased her not to marry Mr. Bannock, but it was no use. It wasn't long before the wedding, which I wouldn't attend. It wasn't long before old Bannock showed himself up in his true colors. It turned out that he was worth scarcely anything. Though the farm was still mother's, he got her to agree to have a mortgage placed on it, and the money he put into his business."

"How did he treat you, Jack?" asked Harry, interested.

"I am coming to that. He never liked me, especially when he found I didn't attend the wedding and didn't like him at all. He tried to impose upon me, and order me round, but he didn't make out much. Still, he was always annoying me in mean little ways, and finally I got all I could stand, and the long and short of it is, that I ran away to Portsmouth, and went on a coasting voyage. After I got back I shipped from Boston for Liverpool, and ever since I've kept sailing in one direction or another."

"Haven't you been to see your mother since you left home three years ago?" Harry inquired.

"Of course I have," said Jack promptly. "I always go to see her as soon as I get home from a voyage."

"Do you ever see your stepfather?"

"I have seen him twice. Once he was out of town and I wasn't sorry."

"Has he ever tried to detain you?"

"No. The fact is," said Jack, laughing, "I expect he

was very well content to be rid of me. He made up his mind that I was a pretty hard boy for him to manage. There's only one reason why I should like to be at home."

"What is that?"

"So that I could stand between my mother and that man," said Jack gravely.

"I hope he doesn't ill treat her."

"He doesn't strike her, if that's what you mean. I'd like to see him do it!" exclaimed Jack, with flashing eyes.

"But he teases her and has his own way in everything, but she won't allow anyone to interfere. Poor mother! She was looking pale and thin when I saw her three weeks ago. I am sure she has repented marrying, but she won't own up. When I'm a man——"

"Well, Jack; when you're a man?"

"I'll see that she has a better time, and, if old Bannock don't like it he can clear out. I think he will, anyway."

"Clear out?"

"Yes; he will have spent all the property by that time, and when that is done, he won't make much objection to going away. Then I will take care of mother."

"You are right, Jack. I sympathize with you. I hope you'll succeed. I only wish I had a mother to look out for," and Harry's fine face wore an expression of sadness.

"But there's one thing I can't help saying."

"What is that, Harry?"

"I don't see how you are going to lay up much money in going before the mast. Your pay must be small."

"It is. I only earn ten dollars a month," replied Jack.

"Then how do you expect to better yourself?"

"I'll tell you, if you won't say anything about it."

"Go ahead."

"We are going to Australia, you know. I've heard there are good chances of making money there, in mining or herding cattle, and I mean to leave the ship at Melbourne. Of course, I don't want anything said about it."

"Would the captain try to prevent you, Jack?"

"I think he would. He don't like me, at any rate."

The boys were so absorbed in their conversation that they did not notice the approach of the captain till his harsh voice was heard.

"What are you two boys chattering about?"

Jack turned round startled, but Harry faced the captain calmly, and did not speak.

"Will you answer me?" he repeated, raising his voice.

"I was talking about home and my mother," said Jack.

"Mighty interesting! And what were you talking about?" continued Capt. Hill, turning to Harry.

"That can be of no interest to you, Capt. Hill," said Harry, coldly. "You appear to forget that I am a passenger."

As he walked away, the captain regarded him with an ominous scowl. He wished that for fifteen minutes Harry had been one of the crew.

CHAPTER XXII

HARRY'S DARING ACT

THIS was not the last conversation Harry had with Jack Pendleton—for this he found to be the young sailor's name—and they soon became excellent friends.

"Jack," said Harry, one day, "I never should take you to be a sailor if I met you on land."

"Why not?"

"You don't talk like one."

"I suppose you mean that I never say 'shiver my timbers,' and use other like expressions."

"No; but because you talk like a well-educated boy."

"So I am. I was always fond of my books and stood

high in school. But for my stepfather I might be there yet. My education stopped at the age of thirteen."

"Not necessarily. You have learned a good deal since."

"Yes, but not out of books. I hope sometime to be able to continue my studies. At present it is my business to learn seamanship."

Harry had the more time on his hands, as the professor took sick and was confined for three or four weeks to his cabin. There was no danger, but still the ship's surgeon advised him to stay below.

"What makes you keep company with that sailor boy, Mr. Vane?" asked Montgomery Clinton, who would have liked more of Harry's society himself.

"Why shouldn't I?"

"Because he is a common sailor, don't you know?"

"I think he is rather an uncommon sailor."

"Oh, yes; I suppose he can read and write; but, of course, he can never be admitted into society."

"He may be a captain some day."

"But he isn't now. I give you my word I noticed when you were speaking with him, that his fingers were all soiled with tar. That's horrid, you know."

"Don't you think he's a good-looking boy?"

"Well, yes, for one of the lower order, Mr. Vane."

"You forget we don't have any distinction of classes in America."

"Don't we, though? By Jove! Mr. Vane, you don't put yourself on a level with those creatures that dig ditches and climb masts, and such things?"

"Your sentiments are very undemocratic, Mr. Clinton. You ought to have been born in England."

"I wish I had been. I like their institutions a good deal better than ours, don't you know?"

"When I first spoke with you, Mr. Clinton, I thought you might be an Englishman."

"Did you, really?" inquired Clinton, with evident pleas-

ure. "I'm often taken for an Englishman, on my honor. I don't know why it is, but positively, I'm often asked when I came from the other side."

"Would you rather be taken for an Englishman than an American?"

"Well, you see, there are some Americans that are so vulgar, don't you know?—talk through their noses, and all that."

"Where were you born, Mr. Clinton?"

"In Massachusetts, not far from Boston."

"Then you are a Yankee."

"Oh! don't call me that, Mr. Vane. I really couldn't stand it. People always think of a Yankee as a tall, slat-sided individual, like Asa Trenchard, in the play of 'Our American Cousin.'"

"But he's a much more creditable character than Lord Dundreary," said Harry, who had once seen the play performed by a traveling company in his native place. "Dundreary, though a lord, was a perfect idiot."

"Still, he knew how to behave in society and wore good clothes."

"Would you prefer to be Lord Dundreary rather than Asa Trenchard?"

"Of course. How can you ask the question?"

"I wanted to get your idea on the subject."

"By the way, Mr. Vane, are you descended from Sir Henry Vane, one of the royal governors of Massachusetts? I have been meaning to ask you."

"I can't tell, Mr. Clinton; but my name happens to be the same—Harry."

"Really, that is very interesting. I should think you would look up the matter."

"Perhaps I will when I return home!" said Harry, who cared very little about the matter. From this time, however, Clinton regarded him with increased respect, from his supposed aristocratic lineage. Our hero treated him

with good-natured toleration, but much preferred the company of Jack Pendleton, sailor as he was, though his fingers were not infrequently smeared with tar. He had a chance, though at some personal risk, to do him a signal service before long.

The captain's habits, it must be said, did not improve. Generally he kept within safe bounds, but at times he allowed his appetite to get the better of him. Whenever that happened, it was fortunate if he remained in his cabin, leaving the management of the ship to the mate, Mr. Holdfast, who was thoroughly temperate. Unfortunately, he would stagger upstairs and give orders which might, or might not, be judicious.

Of course, this state of things was perfectly well understood by all on board. One of the passengers, in an interview with the mate, tried to draw him out on the subject, and asked him, if matters should absolutely require it, whether he would assume command of the ship.

"I would rather not express myself on that point," said Holdfast cautiously. "As a subordinate it would not be becoming. It will be time enough when the contingency you speak of arrives."

One day—it was about a month after they left port—Capt. Hill came up on deck in one of his worst fits of intoxication. All the passengers were on deck, it being a fair day. They regarded the captain with alarm, for in his hand he held a pistol.

Jack Pendleton had been sent up to the masthead on some duty by the mate. The captain's roving eyes fell upon him, and the dislike he felt for the boy found vent.

"What are you doing up there, you young lubber?"

"Mr. Holdfast sent me," answered Jack.

"You lie!" roared the captain. "I'll teach you to lie to me!"

"I'll come down, sir," said Jack, "if you say so."

"I'll bring you down!" shouted the captain furiously, as he deliberately pointed the pistol at the cabin boy.

There was a cry of horror on the part of the passengers as they saw the insane act of the captain, and realized the peril of poor Jack. But, in spite of all, the boy would probably have fallen a victim to the drunken fury of Capt. Hill. Jack himself fully understood his danger, and his ruddy face turned pale. His life hung in the balance, and was saved only by the courage of his boy friend, Harry.

Of all the passengers, Harry stood nearest to the captain. When he saw the pistol pointed at Jack, he did not stop to think, but made a bound, and dashed the weapon from the captain's hand. It was discharged, but the bullet sped over the rail and dropped into the ocean. Nor did Harry stop here. He seized the fallen pistol, and hurled it over the side of the vessel.

The captain was for a moment stupefied by the suddenness of the act. Then, in a voice of fury, he exclaimed, pointing to Harry: "Put that boy in irons!"

CHAPTER XXIII

A SENSATIONAL SCENE

"PUT that boy in irons!" repeated Capt. Hill. Not a sailor stirred.

"Here, you two men, seize the boy, and carry him below!" exclaimed the captain.

The two men looked at each other, moved a step forward and then stopped.

"Is this mutiny?" roared the captain, with a blood-curdling oath. "Am I master in my own ship or not?"

What might have been the issue, it is hard to tell, had

not the Yankee passenger, already referred to, Jonathan Stubbs, come forward and taken up the gauntlet.

"Look here, cap'n," he commenced, in a drawling tone, "what's all this fuss you're kickin' up? You're kinder riled, ain't you?"

"Who are you that dare to bandy words with me?"

"I thought you knew my name," answered the Yankee, with imperturbable coolness, "but, if you don't, here is my card;" and he deliberately drew a card from his pocket, and tendered it to the chief officer.

Capt. Hill struck it from his hand.

"That is the way I treat your card, sir. Men, do you hear me? Put that boy in irons, or must I do it myself?"

"Look here, cap'n, let's argy that matter a little," said Stubbs. "What's the boy to be put in irons for?"

"For grossly insulting me, and defying my authority, sir."

"He has prevented your committing murder."

"Take care, sir!" thundered the captain, "or I may put you in irons, also."

"I reckon you might find a little opposition," said the Yankee, quietly. "I'm a passenger on this vessel, Capt. Hill, and your authority doesn't extend to me."

"We'll see about that, sir," said the captain, and he grasped Stubbs by the collar.

Now, the Yankee was not a heavy man, but he was very strong and wiry, and, moreover, in his early days, like Abraham Lincoln, he had been the best wrestler in the Vermont village in which he was born. He was a very quiet, peaceable man, but he was accustomed to resent insult in an effective way. He wrenched himself free by a powerful effort, then, with a dexterous movement of one of his long legs, he tripped up the captain, who fell in a heap upon the deck. The shock, added to the effects of his intoxication, seemed to stupefy the captain, who remained where he fell.

"Boys," said Stubbs coolly, to the two sailors, who had been ordered to put Harry in irons, "hadn't you better help the captain into his cabin? He seems to be unwell."

Just then the mate came on deck. He didn't make inquiries, but took in the situation at a glance, and assisted the captain to his feet.

"Shall I help you downstairs, sir?" he asked.

The captain silently acquiesced.

Jack Pendleton scrambled down from his elevated perch with the agility of a cat. He ran up to Harry, and grasped his hand, with evident emotion.

"You have saved my life!" he said. "I will always be your friend. I would lay down my life for you."

"It's all right, Jack," said Harry, rather shyly. "You would have done the same for me."

"Yes, I would," answered Jack, heartily, "but there's no one else who would have done it for me."

"Are you goin' to leave me out, my boy?" asked the Yankee, with a smile on his plain but good-natured face.

"No, sir," responded Jack. "You stood up to the captain like a man. He didn't frighten you."

"No, I wasn't much scared," drawled Stubbs, contorting his features drolly. "But, I say, young man, I've got a piece of advice to give you. You don't seem to be much of a favorite with the captain."

"It doesn't look so," said Jack, laughing.

"Just you keep out of his way. When a man gets as full as he does, he's apt to be dangerous."

"Thank you, sir; I will."

Among the spectators of the scene just described, the most panic-stricken, probably, was Montgomery Clinton, the Brooklyn dude.

After the captain had gone below, he walked up to Harry, whom he regarded with evident admiration.

"I say, you're quite a hero. I was awfully frightened

don't you know, when that big bully aimed at the sailor boy."

"You looked a little nervous, Mr. Clinton," said Harry.

"You were awfully brave, to knock the pistol out of his hand. I don't see how you dared to do it."

"I didn't stop to think of the danger."

"I'm glad you're not put in irons."

"I don't think I should like it, though I never had any experience. You'd have stood by me, wouldn't you?"

Clinton was evidently alarmed at the suggestion.

"Yes, of course," he said, nervously; "that is, I would have gone down to see you on the sly. You wouldn't expect me to fight the captain, don't you know?"

Harry could hardly refrain from smiling at the idea of the spindle-shaped dude resisting the captain; but he kept a straight face as he answered:

"I look upon you as a brave man, Mr. Clinton. When I get into trouble, I shall be sure to call upon you."

"Oh, certainly," stammered Clinton; "but I say, Mr. Vane, I hope you'll be prudent; I do, really. Capt. Hill might shoot you, you know, as he tried to shoot the sailor boy just now."

"If he does, Mr. Clinton, I shall expect you to interfere. You are not as strong as the captain, but a bold front will go a great way. If you threaten to—to horse-whip him, I think it might produce an effect upon him."

"Really, my dear Mr. Vane," said Clinton, turning pale, "I don't think I could go as far as that."

"I thought you were my friend, Mr. Clinton."

"So I am, but I think you are, too—too bloodthirsty, Mr. Vane. It is best to be prudent, don't you know? There's that Yankee, Mr. Stubbs; he would do a great deal better than I. He's stronger, and older, and—you'd better speak to him, don't you know?"

"A very good suggestion, Mr. Clinton."

"I am afraid I should fare badly," thought our hero,

"if I depended upon Clinton to stand by me. He isn't of the stuff they make heroes of."

Twenty-four hours passed before Capt. Hill reappeared on deck. Meanwhile, Harry had received congratulations from all the passengers on his display of pluck, and from some of the sailors besides. If he had not been a sensible boy, he might have been spoiled by praise.

"I'll stand by you, my lad," said Jonathan Stubbs. "The captain may try to do you a wrong, but he will have somebody else to reckon with."

"Thank you, Mr. Stubbs," said Harry, heartily. "I know the value of your help already. Mr. Clinton also is willing to stand by me, though he says he doesn't want to get into a fight with the captain."

"Clinton! That spindle-legged dude!" said Stubbs, exploding with laughter. "My! he couldn't scare a fly."

Harry laughed, too. He could not well help it.

"He seems a good fellow, though not exactly a hero," he said. "I am glad to have his good will."

"He is more of a tailor's dummy than a man," said Stubbs. "I always want to laugh when I look at him. Hist! there's the captain."

Harry turned quickly toward the companion way, and saw Capt. Hill set foot on the deck. A glance satisfied him that the captain was sober.

CHAPTER XXIV

A STORM

CAPT. HILL must have observed Harry and Mr. Stubbs, but he walked by them without notice, and attended to his duties, giving his orders in a sharp, quick tone. He was thoroughly fitted for the post of chief officer when not under the influence of liquor.

"I am glad to see that the captain is sober," said Stubbs.

"So am I," answered Harry.

Harry was a little apprehensive that Capt. Hill would show resentment for his boyish interference, though it had saved him from committing murder under such circumstances, and before so many witnesses, that he could not well have escaped conviction and punishment whenever the ship reached land. But, except ignoring his presence, the captain did not in any way intimate his recollection of the occurrence. From this time, indeed, he seemed to turn over a new leaf.

One change, however, all noticed in Capt. Hill. He became silent, reserved, morose. His orders were given in a quick, peremptory tone, and he seemed to cherish a grudge against all on board.

Between the captain and the mate, there was a great difference. Mr. Holdfast had a bluff, hearty way with him which made him popular with all on board. As an officer, he was strict, but in private he was affable and agreeable. The sailors felt instinctively that he was their friend, while they respected his seamanship. If a vote had been taken, there was not one but would have preferred him as captain to Captain Hill.

Thus far—I am speaking of a time when the *Nantucket* was three months out—there had been no serious storm. Rough weather there had been, and wet, disagreeable weather, but the stanch ship had easily overcome all the perils of the sea, and, with the exception of Montgomery Clinton, no one had been seriously alarmed. But one afternoon a cloud appeared in the hitherto clear sky which would have attracted no attention from a landsman. Mr. Holdfast observed it, however, and, quietly calling the captain, directed his attention to it.

"I think we are going to have a bad storm, Capt. Hill," he said. "That's a weather breeder."

The captain watched the cloud for a moment, and then answered quietly: "I think you are right, Mr. Holdfast. You may give your orders accordingly."

The sails were reefed, and the vessel was prepared for the warfare with the elements which awaited it.

"What are they doing that for, Mr. Vane?" asked Clinton, who chanced to be conversing with our hero. "It's a pity to reef the sails when we are going so nicely."

"I shall be glad to reach land myself, but I suppose if they furl the sails they have good reason."

"I give you my word, Mr. Vane, I'm quite tired of wearing the same clothes day after day. When I was on shore my tailor had orders to make me twelve suits a year. We've been at sea three months, and I've just had to wear the same suits till I'm tired of them."

"How many suits did you bring with you?"

"Only six. It was all I had room for."

"I don't know what you will think of me, then," said Harry. "I have but one besides the one I have on."

"Oh, by Jove! that's a very narrow margin! I don't see how you manage, don't you know?"

"You see, I never aspired to be a leader of fashion like you, Mr. Clinton."

"You are awfully kind, Mr. Vane," said the dude, with a gratified smile; "quite complimentary, on my word. I don't want to boast, but my tailor tells me I have more pairs of trousers than any other young society man in Brooklyn. 'Pon my word."

"That must be a great satisfaction, Mr. Clinton," said Harry; "we can't all be fashionable. Now, I wouldn't dare to tell you how few clothes I have."

"You are only a boy, you know. No offense, of course."

"Certainly not; as you say, I am only a boy. But if you don't mind telling me how many pairs of pants——"

"Excuse me," interrupted Clinton, in a horrified tone. "They never say pants in fashionable circles."

"I beg your pardon, I meant trousers. How many pairs of trousers did your wardrobe contain?"

"Forty-three," answered Clinton, in a complacent tone.

"You must spend a great deal for clothes, then."

"I have bills with several tailors," Clinton explained. "That class of people expect to wait, you know."

"Then I hope, for their sake, we shan't be shipwrecked."

"Don't mention such a horrid word," said Clinton, nervously. "Really, it makes me very uncomfortable, don't you know?"

Harry, out of regard to Clinton's feelings, did not pursue the subject, but in a short time it forced itself upon the attention of all on board. The little cloud increased portentously in size. All at once a strong wind sprang up, the sea roughened and the billows grew white with fury, while the good ship, stanch as she was, creaked and groaned and was tossed about, as if it were a toy boat on the wrathful ocean.

The passengers were all seriously alarmed. They had never before realized what a storm at sea was. Even a man of courage may well be daunted by the terrific power of the sea when it is roused to such an exhibition.

"Harry," said the professor, "this is terrible."

"Yes, indeed," answered the boy, gravely.

"If I were indeed the magician I claim to be," added the professor, with a faint smile, "I would try to subdue the storm, but all my tricks are of no avail here."

"I suppose it is because we are landsmen that it seems so terrible to us."

"Not wholly. See how grave and anxious the captain and mate look. The sailors, too, work as if they knew their lives were at stake."

"It is very fortunate the captain is not intoxicated."

"Even if he were, such a thing as this ought to sober him. It looks very doubtful whether we shall ever give entertainments in Australia."

"We will hope for the best, at any rate, professor," said Harry manfully. "There is nothing to do but to trust in Providence."

"Well thought of, Harry. I am not a religious man—more's the pity—but I believe in God, and trust in Him."

It became so rough and difficult to stand on deck, on account of the vessel being tossed about like a cockle shell, that Harry felt constrained to go below.

As he passed the cabin of Montgomery Clinton, he heard a faint voice call his name.

Entering, he saw the dude stretched out in his berth, with an expression of helpless terror in his weak face.

"Oh! Mr. Vane," he said; "do you think we are going to the bottom?"

"I hope not, Mr. Clinton."

"It is too awfully horrid!" groaned Clinton. "I'd cheerfully give away all my trousers and wear overalls the rest of my life, if I could be on land."

Harry was amused in spite of himself.

"I think I would do the same," he said. "But wouldn't you find life a burden if you had to dress in that way?"

"I don't care. I'm awfully in earnest!" said Clinton.

CHAPTER XXV

THE "NANTUCKET'S" DANGER

It was a terrible night. None of the passengers ventured upon deck. Indeed, such was the motion that it would have been dangerous, as even the sailors found it difficult to keep their footing. Harry was pale and quiet, unlike his friend from Brooklyn, whose moans were heard mingled with the noise of the tempest.

It was about three o'clock in the morning when those below heard, with terror, a fearful crash, and a trampling of feet above. One of the masts had fallen before the fury of the storm, and the shock made the good ship careen to a dangerous extent. What had happened, however, was not understood below.

"I wonder what has happened," said the professor, nervously. "I think I will go and see."

He got out of his berth, but only to be pitched helpless to the other end of the cabin.

"This is terrible!" he said, as he picked himself up.

"I will try my luck, professor," said Harry.

He scrambled out of his berth, and, with great difficulty, made his way to the deck.

One glance told him what had occurred. The crippled ship was laboring through the sea. It seemed like a very unequal combat, and Harry might be excused for deciding that the ship was doomed. All about, the sea wore its fiercest aspect. Harry returned cautiously to his cabin.

"Well?" said the professor.

"One of the masts is gone," answered the boy. "The ship is having a hard time."

"Is there danger?" asked the professor, anxiously.

"I am afraid so," said Harry, gravely.

Montgomery Clinton heard both question and answer, and was seized with panic.

"Do you think we are going to the bottom, Mr. Vane?" he asked, trembling.

"We are in great peril, but there is always hope."

"Oh! why did I ever come to sea?" sobbed the wretched dude. "I was having a good time in Brooklyn, I was a great favorite with the ladies, and all the young men admired my clothes. I wish I was there, now."

"What is the fool bawling about?" was heard from the next cabin, occupied by Mr. Stubbs. "If you've got to die, can't you take it calmly, as I do?"

"I don't want to be drowned! It's perfectly awful!" moaned Clinton. "I—I never expected to become food for fishes."

"Don't be alarmed! None of the fishes will meddle with you," returned Stubbs, in a sarcastic tone.

At length the night wore away. The violence of the storm seemed to have abated, for, after a time, the motion diminished. More enterprising than the rest of the passengers, Harry resolved to go on deck.

"Won't you come with me, Mr. Clinton?" he asked.

"I—I couldn't, 'pon my honor. I'm as weak as a rag. I don't think I could get out of my berth, really, now."

"I'll go with you, my young friend," said Mr. Stubbs.

Harry and his Yankee friend set foot cautiously on deck. The prospect was not reassuring. The ship rolled heavily, and from the creaking it seemed that the timbers of the hull were strained. The sailors looked fagged out, and there was a set, stern look on the face of the captain, whom, nevertheless, Mr. Stubbs ventured to accost.

"What's the prospect, captain?" he asked.

"You'd better make your will," said the captain, grimly.

"That's cheerful," commented Stubbs, turning to Harry.

"Yes, sir," answered Harry, soberly.

"Don't tell our foppish friend below, or he'll rend our ears with his howls. But you, my young friend, it's rather rough on you. How old are you?"

"Sixteen."

"And I'm rising fifty. Even if I am taken away, I've a good thirty years the advantage of you. I've had a good time, on the whole, and enjoyed myself as well as the average. Still, I don't quite like going to the bottom in the *Nantucket*. I was looking forward to twenty years or so more of life."

"We must submit to the will of God," said Harry.

"You are right, my boy! It is easy to see that you

have been well trained. Mr. Holdfast"—for they had reached the place where the mate was standing—"shall we outlive the storm?"

"It is hard to say, Mr. Stubbs. It depends on the stanchness of the ship. We will do what we can."

Ten minutes later there was a sinister answer to the inquiry of Mr. Stubbs. A sailor, who had been sent down into the hold, came with the information that the ship had sprung a leak.

Then commenced the weary work at the pumps. The sailors were already worn out with fighting the storm under the direction of the captain and mate, and it seemed almost more than flesh and blood could stand to undertake this additional labor.

"Can't we help at this work, Mr. Stubbs?" asked Harry. "The poor men look utterly exhausted."

"Well thought of, my boy! I am with you. I will speak to the captain."

But Mr. Holdfast, the mate, chanced to be nearer, and to him Mr. Stubbs put the question:

"Can't I help at the pumps?"

"It is hard work, sir."

"I used to turn grindstone when a boy. I guess I can do it."

"And I, too, Mr. Holdfast," put in Harry.

"I accept your offer with thanks. The men are very tired."

So Harry and Mr. Stubbs helped at this necessary work, and when the professor and the Melbourne merchant heard of it they, too, volunteered. But Marmaduke Timmins, the valetudinarian, and Montgomery Clinton felt quite inadequate to the task.

"My wretched health would not allow of any physical exertion," said Mr. Timmins, sadly. "This storm makes me feel worse than usual. I have taken double doses of pills, but it has done me no good."

As for Clinton, no one asked him. Work did not appear to be in his line.

"He hasn't got the strength of an able-bodied cat," said Mr. Stubbs, "even at the best of times. Now, I should rate him at about one-mouse power."

Harry found the work tiresome and fatiguing, but he had the comfort of feeling that he was relieving the exhausted sailors, and doing something to save his own life and the lives of his companions.

He caught sight of poor Jack, looking ready to drop.

"Jack, you must be very tired," he said.

"If I stood still I should drop on the deck fast asleep."

"Can't you lie down for an hour? I am taking your place."

Mr. Holdfast coming up at this moment, Harry suggested this to him, and the mate said kindly:

"Jack, my lad, go below and catch a little nap. I will call you when I want you."

So Jack, much relieved, went below, and, without a thought of the danger, so fatigued was he, fell asleep the moment he got into his bunk, and was not called up for four hours.

After a while they reduced the flow of water, but ascertained that the ship was badly strained, and by no means safe. It was not till the next day, however, that an important decision was reached.

All were called on deck.

"It is my duty to tell you," said Capt. Hill, "that the ship is so damaged by the recent storm that it is liable to sink at any time. Those who choose to run the risk may remain, however. I propose, with such as choose to join me, to take to the boats. I will give you fifteen minutes to decide."

CHAPTER XXVI

“WHO WILL STAY?”

THE decision was a momentous one. It might be death to remain on the ship, but to a landsman it seemed still more perilous to embark on an angry sea in a frail boat.

The passengers looked at each other in doubt and perplexity.

They had but fifteen minutes in which to make up their minds.

The mate stood by, serious and thoughtful.

“Mr. Holdfast,” said Mr. Stubbs, “do you agree with the captain that it is our best course to take to the boats?”

“It is hard to tell,” said the mate, cautiously.

“What is your impression?”

“I should prefer to try the ship a little longer. I say so with diffidence, since the captain has a longer experience than I.”

“I don’t think much of your judgment, Mr. Holdfast,” said Capt. Hill, in a tone of contempt.

The mate’s face flushed—not so much at the words as the tone.

“Nevertheless, Capt. Hill,” he said, “I stand by what I have said.”

“Mr. Holdfast,” said Mr. Stubbs, who seemed to speak for the passengers, “if some of us decide to remain on the ship will you remain with us?”

“I will!” answered the mate, promptly.

“Then set me down as the first to remain,” said Stubbs.

Somehow, this man, rough and abrupt as he was, had impressed Harry as a man in whom confidence might be reposed. He felt safe in following where he led.

“I am but a boy,” he said, “but I have to decide for my life. I remain with the mate and Mr. Stubbs.”

Quietly Stubbs shook hands with Harry.

“I am glad to have you with us,” he said, earnestly. “We will die or live together.”

Next came Prof. Hemenway.

“Put me down as the third,” he said. “Harry, we sailed together, and we will remain together to the end.”

“I go in the boat,” said John Appleton. “I have a great respect for Mr. Holdfast, but I defer to the captain’s judgment as superior.”

He went over and ranged himself beside the captain.

“You are a sensible man, sir,” said Capt. Hill, with a scornful glance at the mate and the passengers who sided with him. “Mr. Holdfast can go down with the ship, if he desires. I prefer to cut loose from a doomed vessel.”

Marmaduke Timmins, the invalid, looked more sallow and nervous than ever. He had swallowed a pill while the others were speaking, to give himself confidence.

“I will go with the captain,” he said. “My life is likely to be short, for my diseases are many, but I owe it to myself to do my best to save it.”

“In deciding to go with me, you are doing your best, sir,” said Capt. Hill.

He had not hitherto paid much attention to Mr. Timmins, whom he looked upon as a crank on the subject of health, but he was disposed to look upon him now with more favor.

At this moment Montgomery Clinton appeared at the head of the stairs. The poor fellow was pale, and disheveled, and tottered from weakness.

“What’s going on?” he asked, feebly. Harry took it upon himself to explain, using as few words as possible.

“Will you go with the captain, or stay on the *Nantucket*?” asked Harry.

“Shall you stay on the ship, Mr. Vane?” asked Clinton, feebly.

“Yes.”

“Then I will. Really, I couldn’t stand sailing in a little boat, you know. It’s too horrid.”

“That’s settled, then!” said the captain. “Into the boats with you!”

The sailors and the two passengers lowered themselves into the long boat, which was large enough to receive them all, till only Jack Pendleton and the captain remained.

“Get in, boy!” said the captain, harshly.

Jack stepped back, and said manfully: “I will remain on board the ship, sir.”

“Stay, then!” said the captain, rounding up the sentence with an oath.

“I am glad you will remain with us, Jack,” said Harry, smiling kindly. “I don’t want to be separated from you.”

While this discussion had been going on, the boat was being stored with kegs of water and provisions, and soon after the sailors began to ply the oars.

The little band that remained looked on silently and solemnly, as they saw their late companions borne farther and farther away from them on the crested waves.

“It’s a question which will last longer, the ship or the boat,” said Mr. Holdfast.

“We must work—I know that,” said Mr. Stubbs. “Capt. Holdfast, I salute you as my commander. Give us your orders.”

“Are you all agreed, gentlemen?” asked Holdfast.

“We are,” answered all except Montgomery Clinton, who was clinging to the side with a greenish pallor on his face.

“Then I shall set you to work at the pumps. Jack, I assign you and the professor to duty first. You will work an hour; then Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Vane will relieve you. I will look out for the vessel’s course.”

“I am afraid I couldn’t pump,” said Montgomery Clinton. “I feel so awfully weak, you know, I think I’m going to die!”

His slight form was immediately convulsed, and he leaned over the side with a woebegone look. When he was relieved, the mate said, with a slight smile, “You had better go below, Mr. Clinton. You may be fit for duty to-morrow. To-day I will excuse you.”

“You’re awfully kind, I’m sure,” said poor Clinton, not forgetting his politeness even in his anguish. “If I’m alive to-morrow, I hope I’ll be strong enough to pump. I used to pump water for my auntie when I was a boy.”

The poor fellow, with wild, uncertain steps, staggered to the stairs, and, with the help of Harry, who saw that he was really very weak, descended to his cabin.

“You’re very kind, Mr. Vane,” he faltered.

“I am afraid you are feeling very miserable, Mr. Clinton,” said Harry, with a touch of genuine pity. He would not have liked to be so weak and unmanly as the dude, but he pitied him, nevertheless.

“Yes, Mr. Vane,” said Clinton, dolefully, “I don’t expect to live long.”

“We may none of us live long,” answered Harry gravely.

“You’re awfully strong, you know, compared to me,” said Clinton. “My grandmother used to say I had a girl’s constitution. If I die first, I leave you all my trousers and the rest of my wardrobe. I’d make a will, but I don’t feel like writing, you know.”

Harry wanted to laugh, but he suppressed the inclination.

“I doubt whether your trousers would fit me, Mr. Clinton,” he said, “but it’s very kind of you, all the same.”

“Don’t mention it, Mr. Vane.”

“But I think you had better make up your mind to live and wear the trousers yourself.”

"I will try to, but——"

Here a lurch of the ship pitched him into his bunk, where Harry left him and rejoined his fellow voyagers on deck.

He looked out to sea and saw the little boat containing the remnant of their company growing smaller and smaller. A sudden feeling of loneliness overcame him, and he asked himself seriously: "Is death, then, so near?"

CHAPTER XXVII

THE END OF THE CRUISE

THE sea was still rough, but the violence of the storm was past. In a few hours the surface of the sea was much less agitated. The spirits of the passengers rose, especially after learning from the mate that he had been able to stop the leak, through the experience which he had acquired in his younger days as assistant to a ship carpenter.

"Then the old ship is likely to float a while longer?" said Mr. Stubbs, cheerfully.

"Not a short time, either, if the weather continues favorable."

"Capt. Hill was in too much of a hurry to leave the vessel," remarked Harry.

"Yes," answered Holdfast. "Such was my opinion when I thought the *Nantucket* in much worse condition than at present. If the captain and sailors had remained on board, we could have continued our voyage to Melbourne without difficulty."

"And now?" said Mr. Stubbs, interrogatively.

"Now we have no force to man her. Little Jack and myself are the only sailors on board."

"But not the only men."

"That is true. I think, however, that you or the professor would find it rather hard to spread or take in sail."

Mr. Stubbs looked up into the rigging and shrugged his shoulders.

"You are right, captain," he said. "Here is Harry, now. He might possibly climb aloft. As for me, it makes my head swim to think of myself up there."

"There is Mr. Clinton," suggested Harry, smiling.

"He would make a good tailor's dummy," said Mr. Stubbs. "I apprehend that's all he's fit for. Have you formed any plans, captain?"

"We must drift, I suppose," said Holdfast. "If we could obtain even four or five able seamen, I would continue the voyage."

"Is there any hope of that, do you think?"

"We might encounter some ship that could spare us that number, though vessels in these latitudes seldom carry more men than they require for their own needs. Meanwhile we have one comfort."

"What is that?"

"We are plentifully supplied with provisions. We shall not fall short either of food or drink."

The next day Mr. Clinton appeared on deck. He looked faded and played out, but he was no longer the woebegone creature of a day or two previous. Even he turned out to be of use, for he knew something about cooking, and volunteered to assist in preparing the meals, the ship's cook having left the ship with the captain. Accordingly, he rose in the estimation of the passengers—having proved that he was not wholly a drone.

Jack and Harry grew still more intimate. The young sailor was under no restraint now that the captain was not on board, for with the mate he had always been a favorite.

All efforts were made to keep the ship on her course. They could not put up all the sails, however, and made but slow progress. They did little but drift. Nor did they encounter any other vessels for several days, so that there was no chance of obtaining the desired assistance.

"I wonder where it will all end, Jack?" said Harry, one evening.

"I don't trouble myself much about that, Harry," said the young sailor. "I am content as I am."

"Don't you look ahead, then?"

"I am happy with you and the few we have on board. They are all kind to me; what more do I need?"

"I can't be contented so easily, Jack. I hope there is a long life before us. Here we are, making no progress. We are doing nothing to advance ourselves."

But this did not make much impression on Jack. He did not look beyond the present, and so that this was comfortable he left the future to look out for itself.

"What do you think has become of Capt. Hill and his companions, Mr. Holdfast?" asked Mr. Stubbs, on the third evening after the separation.

"He is probably still afloat, unless he has been fortunate enough to be picked up by some vessel."

"Do you think that probable?"

"It is possible, but the ocean is wide, and there is plenty of chance to escape observation."

"Speaking plainly, do you think his chance of a safe deliverance as good as ours?"

"No, I do not," answered the mate, promptly. "If I did, I should favor our taking the remaining boat, and following his example."

"You don't favor this?"

"No; here we have a good stock of provisions, far more comfortable accommodations, and are more likely, from our size, to attract attention."

"There is no hope of reaching land in the *Nantucket*, is there?" continued Mr. Stubbs.

"There is considerable fear of it," said the mate.

"Why do you use the word fear?" asked Stubbs, puzzled.

"What I mean is, that we are likely to run aground upon some unknown island. If the shore is rocky, it may break us to pieces, and that, of course, will be attended with danger to life or limb."

Stubbs looked thoughtful.

"I should like to see land," he said, "but I wouldn't like to land in that way. It reminds me of an old lady who, traveling by cars for the first time, was upset in a collision. As she crawled out of the window, she asked, innocently: 'Do you always stop this way?'"

"There are dangers on land as well as on the sea," said the mate, "as your story proves; though one is not so likely to realize them. In our present circumstances, there is one thing I earnestly hope for."

"What is that?"

"That we may not have another storm. I fear, in her dismantled condition, the *Nantucket* would have a poor chance of outliving it, particularly as we have no one but Jack and myself to do seamen's work."

Mr. Stubbs walked thoughtfully away.

Harry, who had seen him talking with the mate, asked him the nature of the conversation.

Mr. Stubbs told him.

"The fact is, Harry," he said, "we are in a critical condition. Whether we are ever to see old terry firmy again—Mr. Stubbs was not a classical scholar—seems a matter of doubt."

"And the worst of it is," said Harry, "there seems to be nothing you and I can do to increase our chances of safety."

"No, unless we could manage to see a ship which the

chief officer had overlooked. That, I take it, is not very likely. I don't care so much about being lost for my own sake."

"What, then?" asked Harry, puzzled.

"It's when I think of what the world will lose by my invention," explained Stubbs gravely. "I tell you, Harry Vane, it's going to revolutionize the world."

"What is it?" Harry naturally inquired.

"That would be telling," answered Stubbs, shrewdly. "I am not prepared to make known my discovery yet. If I did, ten to one some other fellow would seize the idea, and get the start of me. I want to reap the advantage of it myself."

"Why didn't you develop it in America, Mr. Stubbs?"

"Because I got no encouragement. Besides, I was afraid it would be stolen. My countrymen are sharp. In Australia it will be different. Something told me that there was the place to try it, so I took passage on the *Nantucket*, and here I am."

"I suppose you'd rather be somewhere else," said Harry, smiling.

"I don't mind owning up that I would. But it can't be helped now—I must grin and bear it."

It was toward morning of the fifth night after the captain had left the ship that all on board were startled by a mighty thumping, accompanied by a shock that threw the sleepers out of bed.

Harry ran hastily on deck. The mate was there already.

"What's happened, Mr. Holdfast?" asked the boy, anxiously.

"The ship has struck on a rocky ledge!"

"Are we in danger?"

"In great danger. Call all the passengers. We must take to the boat, for the *Nantucket* is doomed!"

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE WRECK OF THE "NANTUCKET"

It was still quite dark, but it was light enough to see that the ship had struck upon a reef. Straining their eyes, the alarmed passengers could descry land. Indeed, the reef was an outlying part of it.

All eyes were turned upon the captain, as Mr. Holdfast was now called.

"If I had had men enough to stand watch, this would not have happened," he said.

"Is there any hope, Mr. Holdfast?" asked Montgomery Clinton, clasping his hands in terror.

"Plenty of it," answered the mate, curtly, "but we must leave the ship."

Under his direction the remaining boat—for Capt. Hill and his companions had only taken away one—was lowered. Steering clear of the reef, they found themselves in a cove, bordered on three sides by land. By the light, now rapidly increasing, they saw grass and trees, and the sight gladdened them in spite of the grave peril that menaced them.

"Mr. Holdfast," said Clinton, anxiously, "won't you let me go back for my wardrobe. I can't get along without that, don't you know?"

"I don't think it's the fashion to wear clothes here, Mr. Clinton," said the mate, his eye twinkling. "You'll be sure to be in fashion."

"But that's horrid, you know. I assure you I don't care to imitate the natives."

"Provisions are of the first importance, Mr. Clinton," said Holdfast, seriously. "After that, we will save what we can."

They put on the boat as large a supply of stores as they dared, and then rowed ashore. Landing the passengers, Holdfast selected Jack and Harry, and went back to the ship for a further supply.

"We must lay in as much as we can, for we don't know how long we are to remain here," he said.

When the second trip had been made, it was decided to rest for a time, and eat breakfast.

The little group gathered on a bluff looking out to sea, and sitting down, ate heartily. By this time the sun had made its appearance, and it bade fair to be a pleasant day.

"Have you any idea where we are, Mr. Holdfast?" asked Mr. Stubbs.

"I only know that we are on an island. There is no mainland near here," answered the commander.

"It seems to be a large one, then. While you were gone with the boys, I ascended a tree, and, looking inland, could not see the ocean in that direction."

"What tree did you climb?" asked Harry.

Mr. Stubbs pointed it out.

"There's another one higher and on higher ground. Mr. Clinton, won't you climb it, and see what you can discover?" asked Harry, mischievously.

"Really, Mr. Vane," answered Clinton, in great trepidation, "I couldn't think of it. I am quite sure I should tear my trousers, and they are the only ones I have here. I wish the captain would let me go to the ship and get the balance of my wardrobe."

"Do you think you could manage this boat alone, Mr. Clinton?" asked the mate.

"Good gracious, no. Perhaps Mr. Vane would go with me."

"I feel like exploring the island," said Harry; "who will go with me?"

Curious to see what kind of a new home they had, all set out. First, however, the professor asked:

"How long before the ship is likely to go to pieces, Mr. Holdfast?"

"Not under a day or two in this weather," was the answer. "Later in the day I will board her again."

They struck inland and walked for about two miles. There were trees and plants such as they had never seen before, and the songs of unknown birds floated out upon the air. It was certainly a delightful change from the contracted life they had been leading upon shipboard.

"Do you think the land is inhabited?" asked Harry.

"I know no more about it than you do, my lad," answered Holdfast.

"Suppose we should meet with a pack of savages armed with spears!" suggested Harry, with a side look at Clinton, who was walking by him.

"Oh, good gracious! Mr. Holdfast, do you think we will?" asked that young gentleman nervously.

"We must do the best we can. I take it we are all brave, and would be willing to fight."

"Certainly," said Harry; "I can answer for Mr. Clinton and myself."

"Oh! but really, now, I don't think I could fight with savages, you know," said Clinton, turning pale. "We'd better go back, don't you know?"

"You can go back, Mr. Clinton," said Mr. Stubbs. "As for me, I am going forward."

"But I shouldn't dare to go back alone. They might surprise me, you know."

"I am quite sure you would surprise them, Mr. Clinton," said the professor, smiling.

"Do you think so, really?" said the dude, not understanding the significance of this remark.

"I am sure of it."

"Won't you go back with me, Mr. Vane?"

"No, Mr. Clinton; I am curious to explore our new home."

"I wish I was back in Brooklyn," sighed Clinton.

"I should rather be there myself," said Harry. "Yet, if I were only sure of it, I should not mind staying here a while."

"I wonder," said Mr. Stubbs, reflectively, "if anyone were ever shipwrecked on this island before."

"I think it quite likely," said the mate. "It is, it seems, pretty large. If it were located within a convenient distance of New York, I should not be surprised if it were a favorite summer resort."

"I am afraid, Harry," said the professor, "that it will hardly pay to give one of our magical entertainments here."

"Unless the island should be inhabited," suggested Harry.

"Even in that case, I doubt whether the entertainment would be within the comprehension of the dusky savages who might be found here."

"Think, Mr. Clinton," said Harry, "how the dusky maidens would admire you! I am not sure but they might fight among themselves for your favor."

The young man from Brooklyn didn't appear flattered by the suggestion.

"I admire the fair sex, I admit," he said, "but when it comes to copper-colored savages, I would rather be excused, don't you know? I was a great favorite with the young ladies of Brooklyn, and had no end of invitations to parties. If they could only see me now!" he concluded with a sigh.

After a considerable walk, they reached a grove of trees, bearing a different leaf from any to which they were accustomed. They did not appear to produce fruit of any kind, but were comely and afforded a grateful shade. This was the more appreciated, because the sun had begun to make its heat felt, and a feeling of languor diffused itself over all.

"I move we squat here a while," said Mr. Stubbs, quaintly.

"Very well," said the mate. "We have all day before us, and I am afraid a great many to come, in which we may explore the island."

All threw themselves on the grass without ceremony, except Mr. Clinton, who carefully drew from his pocket a linen handkerchief and spread it out to sit upon.

Harry smiled.

"You are more careful than the rest of us, Mr. Clinton," he said.

"I don't want to soil my trousers," said Clinton.

"Especially as you don't know when you can get another pair," suggested Stubbs. "Really, my young friend, I am a little curious as to how we will all be looking a year hence, if we stay here as long. Ten to one we shall have to extemporize new garments of sailcloth."

"Oh! Mr. Stubbs, don't mention such a horrid thing," said Clinton, with an expression of anguish.

"I think you would look rather picturesque, Mr. Clinton, in a sailcloth suit," said Harry, smiling mischievously.

All laughed except Clinton, to whom the subject was a very solemn one.

CHAPTER XXIX

PREPARING A HOME

THEY returned to the shore about noon, and sitting down on the bluff, ate heartily of the stores they had brought with them from the ship. They had brought no water, but, fortunately, discovered a spring on their homeward walk, which promised a constant supply of refreshing drink.

"This seems like a picnic," said Harry, as they sat down on the grass with the food in the center.

"I am afraid it will prove a larger picnic than we care for," remarked the professor.

"Speaking of picnics," said Mr. Clinton, "reminds me of this time last year. I was sojourning in the country. I went to a picnic with two beautiful creatures. 'Pon my word, they actually got jealous of each other. Each thought I liked the other best. I found it very embarrassing, don't you know."

"I should think you would," said Harry, smiling. "How did it turn out?"

"There was a small lake in the picnic grounds, and they insisted on my taking them out in a rowboat."

"Of course you did."

"Certainly. I couldn't refuse, don't you know."

"Did you row, or they?" asked Mr. Stubbs.

"Well, you see, they wanted to row, and I let them. After a while one of them asked me a very embarrassing question."

"What was it?"

"She asked: 'Suppose the boat was to upset, Mr. Clinton, which of us would you save, Sarah or me?'" But she didn't catch me. I answered: 'I shouldn't know which to choose, and so I think I should save myself.'"

"How did that answer suit her?"

"She got mad—some girls are so unreasonable, don't you know? But then, if I had said I would save her, Sarah would have been mad."

All laughed at Mr. Clinton's reminiscence, but he sighed sadly as he thought of the happy past and contrasted with it the unpromising present.

When dinner was over, if their informal meal can be dignified by the name, Mr. Holdfast said:

"I think we had better make another trip to the ship,

and bring back what we can. We shall need a further supply of provisions, and there will be other things that will occur to us as likely to be needed."

"Won't you bring my wardrobe, Mr. Holdfast?" asked Clinton, anxiously. "I want to put on my striped trousers."

"Your wardrobe can wait, Mr. Clinton," said Holdfast, curtly. "There are plenty of things we need more than trousers."

"May I go with you, Mr. Holdfast?" asked Harry.

"Yes," answered the mate; "I will take you and Jack, and Mr. Stubbs, too, may come, if he will."

"I am quite at your command, captain," said the Yankee.

"Then you don't want me?" said Prof. Hemenway, good-naturedly.

"You are rather stout, professor, and a little clumsy. Perhaps you will be kind enough to remain with Mr. Clinton and entertain him."

"He is more likely to entertain me," said the magician, smiling.

"You are awfully kind, professor," said Clinton, who took the remark in a complimentary sense.

"Not at all," was the professor's smiling disclaimer.

Nothing suited Harry better than to make one of the expedition. He and Jack clambered up the ship's sides, and chased each other with boyish fun. Jack had no fear of a stern rebuke from Mr. Holdfast, who had a sympathy with the young. He would not have dared to take such liberties with Capt. Hill.

"How long do you think the ship will hold together, Mr. Holdfast?" asked Stubbs.

"For a week, perhaps, unless the sea becomes rough and dashes her against the reef with violence."

"At present she seems motionless."

"Yes, she is not at present receiving any damage. It

will be a sad day when she goes to pieces," continued the mate, gravely.

"Yes, but it will hardly make our position worse. There is no chance of our making any use of her, I take it."

"You don't quite understand me," said Holdfast. "A sailor gets to feel an attachment for the craft he sails on, and she seems to him something like a living creature. This is my first voyage on the old *Nantucket*, but it will grieve me to see her disappear."

"You take a romantic view of it, captain. Never having been a sailor, I can't quite show your feelings. Still, I shall feel rather lonely when the old hulk collapses. It'll be breaking the last tie that connects us with home and friends, as it were."

It was not easy to decide of what the boat's load should consist. In the main, provisions were taken as an article of first necessity. Some clothing, also, was selected, and among the rest, at Harry's instance, an extra pair of Mr. Clinton's trousers.

Stubbs and Holdfast laughed when Harry came up from below with them hanging over his arm.

"There are other articles of more consequence," said the mate.

"Not to him, Mr. Holdfast," replied Harry.

"He wants to be a dude even on a desert island," said Stubbs, shrugging his shoulders.

"I may take them, may I not, Mr. Holdfast?"

"Yes, if you like. They seem to be what he most cares for."

Great was the delight of Clinton when Harry stepped out of the boat with his beloved trousers in his hands.

"You are awfully kind, Mr. Vane," he said. "They are my nicest pair, too. I paid fifteen dollars for them."

"Very suitable to wear here, Mr. Clinton," remarked

Mr. Stubbs. "It is a pity there are not more people to admire them."

"It's a satisfaction to be well dressed even if you are alone," observed Clinton, gazing at his trousers with rapture.

"I never cared much for clothes," said Stubbs.

"I shouldn't think he did," said Clinton afterwards, in confidence to Harry. "Have you noticed how baggy and shapeless his trousers are? Really, I think he must have employed Noah's tailor. They look as if they came out of the ark, don't you know?"

It was decided not to make another trip to the ship that day. Mr. Holdfast expressed the opinion that the *Nantucket* was not in any immediate danger of going to pieces, and there was other work in hand.

"Do you know anything about the climate here, Mr. Holdfast?" asked the professor.

"I don't think it is ever cold. It is too far south for that."

"I mean as to the chance of rain. I am told that in these tropical places rain comes on very suddenly at times."

"I suspect this is the dry season, professor."

"Still, it may be wise to provide ourselves with some shelter."

"True; have you anything to suggest?"

"It occurred to me that we might procure some of the sails, and use as a roof covering, to shield us from the heat of the sun, and from any unexpected showers."

"A very good idea. I am glad you mentioned it. On the whole, I think I will make one more trip to the ship this afternoon for the special purpose of bringing back materials for a roof. Then we can put it up to-night."

"Better bring hatchets, if there are any on board, some nails and cordage."

"Also well thought of. You are a practical man, professor."

"We shall all have to think for the general benefit. I am sorry I can't do more work, but I never was handy with tools."

"I am," said Stubbs. "In fact, most Yankees are, and I am a Yankee. You can command my services, Mr. Holdfast, in any way that you see fit."

Mr. Holdfast made another trip to the vessel, and brought back quite an expanse of sailcloth. All hands, with the exception of Mr. Clinton, went to work at once, and by sunset a considerable space was roofed over, which the little company regarded with complacency.

"Aren't you going to have any sides or doors?" asked Clinton.

"That can be considered hereafter," said Holdfast. "I don't think we shall need any, since the probability is that the island is not inhabited."

The next morning a great surprise awaited them.

CHAPTER XXX

AN UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL

It might have been because it was the first night on land, or perhaps because they were unusually fatigued, but at any rate the little party slept unusually late. The first one to awake was Harry Vane. It took very little time for him to dress, since he had only taken off his coat. He glanced at his slumbering companions, who were scattered about in different postures. Next to him was Montgomery Clinton, who had carefully placed two handkerchiefs underneath him lest his apparel should be soiled by contact with the earth. He had been rather reluctant to sleep in so unconventional a manner, but there was no help for it.

"Really, Mr. Vane," he said, "I never slept on the ground before. I don't know what my dear auntie would say if she could see me now. She always gave me a nice bed with linen sheets, don't you know, and was so particular that I was made comfortable."

"It won't do us any harm to rough it a little, Mr. Clinton," said Harry. "It will make men of us."

"I don't care about roughing it," said Clinton, rather mournfully. "It's horridly uncomfortable, and I don't see the good of it."

"I don't think you'll find any linen sheets on the island," said Harry, smiling, "unless you put one handkerchief on the grass, and spread the other over you."

"That's a good idea, Mr. Vane. I'm awfully obliged. I'll put two handkerchiefs on the grass and that will save my trousers from being soiled."

Harry could not help wondering how long Clinton would be able to be so particular about his appearance, but he did not harrow up that young gentleman's feelings by a prediction as to the future.

"I'll go up to the spring, and have a wash," Harry decided. "I won't wake anybody, for there's no hurry about getting up."

Returning from the spring, Harry for the first time looked in the direction of the ship. What he saw filled him with amazement. The wreck, which he had thought deserted, was alive with men. He saw a dozen on deck, including two who were obviously not sailors. He could not immediately discern the figures, and ran hastily to the top of the bluff. Then he made the startling discovery that these intruders were the captain and his companions, who had abandoned the ship in the expectation that it was doomed, and after floating about in the long boat had by a wonderful coincidence drifted to the very point which they themselves had reached.

Harry did not know whether to be glad or sorry. He

felt that there was likely to be antagonism between the two parties. All was harmony at present under the management of Mr. Holdfast, but this was not likely to last. Would the captain assume general command, and interfere with their arrangements? From what he knew of him, he thought it likely. Of course he was glad that the chief officer and his companions were saved, but he would have preferred that they had drifted in some other direction.

The news was too important to keep, and he returned to their encampment, and entering, approached the mate, who was sleeping soundly. He leaned over and shook him gently.

"Mr. Holdfast!" he cried.

The mate slowly opened his eyes and started up.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "Has anything happened?"

"I've got great news for you, Mr. Holdfast. Capt. Hill has arrived."

"What!" exclaimed the mate, in amazement. "Arrived—where?"

"He is at this moment on the *Nantucket*, with all the men that accompanied him in the long boat."

Uttering an exclamation of amazement, Mr. Holdfast sprang from the ground, and hastily made his way to the edge of the bluff.

"By Jove!" said he, "you're right. I never heard of anything more wonderful."

Harry could not tell from the expression of his face whether he considered the news good or not.

"Go and wake up the rest, Harry," he said. "They will be surprised, too."

It is needless to say that the news produced surprise and excitement. All hurried to the edge of the bluff, and Mr. Clinton, in his excitement, waved one of his extemporized sheets.

"There's that fool again!" said Capt. Hill, as, looking shorewards, he observed this signal.

It was fortunate for Mr. Clinton that he did not hear this remark.

"Will they come on shore, do you think?" asked Harry, of the mate.

"They will have to; but I shall at once go out to the ship to report to my superior officer. You and Jack may go with me."

It is needless to say that both boys were very glad to accept this invitation. The rest of the party remained on shore and watched the boat's course.

"What will be the issue of this, Mr. Stubbs?" asked the professor, thoughtfully.

"I am afraid there will be friction. The captain is a natural despot, and he will undertake to control us."

"He can have no authority after the ship is wrecked."

"He will claim it, as sure as my name is Stubbs. The fact is, I am rather sorry he hadn't managed to drift to another island. Mr. Holdfast is a much more agreeable man to deal with."

"I agree with you. As a passenger, I shall not recognize the captain's authority on shore."

"Nor I."

Meanwhile, the mate and the two boys had pulled to the ship, and, securing the boat, scrambled on deck.

"Good-morning, Capt. Hill; I am glad to meet you once more," said the mate.

"Humph!" growled the captain, not over politely. "When did you reach here?"

"Yesterday morning."

"Where are the rest of your party?"

"We have a little camp just back of the bluff."

"I see you have been removing articles from the ship," continued the captain, in a tone of disapproval.

"Certainly," answered the mate. "We need them, and I didn't know how long the ship would last."

"It seems in no immediate danger of going to pieces."

"Things look more favorable than they did yesterday morning. What sort of a trip did you have in the boat?"

"A curious question to ask," said the captain, cap-tiously. "We were in danger of being swamped more than once."

"We had better have remained on board the *Nantucket* with you, Mr. Holdfast," said Appleton, the Melbourne merchant.

Capt. Hill chose to take offense at this remark.

"You were quite at liberty to stay, Mr. Appleton," he said. "I didn't urge you to go with me."

"True, Capt. Hill; but I trusted to your opinion that the ship was unsafe."

The captain looked angry, but did not make any reply.

By the sailors, Mr. Holdfast was warmly greeted. He was much better liked than the captain, being a man of even temper, and reasonable in his demands.

"Good-morning, Mr. Holdfast," said Marmaduke Timmins, the valetudinarian. "I am glad to be out of that miserable boat."

"Then you didn't have a good time."

"I came near dying, sir. I managed to lose overboard all the pills and powders I carried with me, and, if you will believe it, I haven't taken any medicine for four entire days."

"You don't seem any the worse for it, that I can see. Indeed, you seem to be less sallow."

Mr. Timmins shook his head in a melancholy way.

"You can't depend upon surface indications," he said. "I feel"—striking his breast—"that I am worse, much worse."

"I hope, then, you have more pills on board," said the mate, politely.

"Yes, fortunately. I could not have lived long without them."

"That man is a greater fool than Clinton," thought Holdfast. "One poisons himself with drugs, while the other only indulges a little harmless vanity."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE LAST OF THE "NANTUCKET"

THOUGH the mate had removed some of the stores, much the larger portion was left on board, for the *Nantucket* had been provisioned for a long voyage. Yet Capt. Hill saw fit to complain.

"It is fortunate that you didn't take all the stores, Mr. Holdfast," he remarked, in a sarcastic tone.

The mate eyed the captain steadily.

"May I ask your meaning, Capt. Hill?" he asked.

"I mean what I say, sir. I think my language requires no interpreter."

"Then I can only reply that it would have made no difference if I had removed all the provisions."

"You appear to forget that I am your superior officer," said the captain, in a heat.

"I had no superior officer at the time I ordered the removal."

"You have now, at any rate."

"We are not at sea, Capt. Hill. The vessel is wrecked, and all distinctions are at an end. Now it is each for himself."

"So, sir, you defy my authority!" exclaimed the captain, looking black.

"I don't recognize it, that is all."

"You shall, sir!" retorted the captain, frowning. "You shall learn, also, that I have means to enforce it."

I have nearly a dozen seamen under me and you have only the boy, Jack Pendleton."

"Capt. Hill, all this is very foolish. We are shipwrecked, and have taken refuge on the same island. Instead of quarreling, we should help each other."

"So, you presume to lecture me!" sneered the captain.

Mr. Holdfast didn't care to continue the dispute.

"I am ready to help you remove what you require," he said, quietly. "It will be well to remove as much as possible to-day, for we may at any time have a storm, that will effectually put an end to our work."

"Very well, sir; I am glad you show a better spirit."

The mate was both annoyed and amused at this evident intention to throw upon him the whole onus of the quarrel, but he did not care to reply. He and the two boys helped remove the stores, and, it being quite early, by noon several boat loads had been deposited on shore, to be removed farther inland when there was a good opportunity. One thing Mr. Holdfast noted with apprehension. There was a considerable quantity of brandy and other spirits in the captain's cabin, which he took care to have included in the articles removed. Remembering the captain's weakness, he feared this might lead to trouble. But he did not take it upon himself to remonstrate, knowing that in the state of the captain's feelings toward him it would be worse than useless.

By three o'clock about all the stores, with other needful articles, had been removed, and there was a large pile on the bluff.

"Captain, will you walk over and see my encampment?" asked Holdfast, now that there was leisure.

"Lead on, sir," said the captain, not overpolitely.

It was not far away and a short walk brought them in front of it.

"Perhaps you will feel inclined to settle near by," suggested Holdfast.

"No, sir; I don't care to intrude upon you."

Eventually the captain selected a spot about half a mile away. Here an encampment was made, very similar to the mate's, but on a larger scale.

"I am glad the captain is not close alongside," said Jack Pendleton.

"So am I," answered Harry, to whom this remark was made. "We are better off by ourselves."

"He would be sure to interfere with us. I saw him scowling at me more than once this morning. You know he don't like me."

"Nor me either, Jack. It will be well for both of us to keep out of his way."

To the great delight of Clinton, more of his "wardrobe," as he called it, was brought ashore. For this he was indebted to the good-natured persistence of Harry, who, though amused at the vanity of the young man from Brooklyn, felt disposed to gratify him in a harmless whim.

"You are awfully kind, Mr. Vane," said Clinton. "Did you save your own wardrobe?"

"I have an extra pair of pants, and some underclothing."

"Don't say pants—it's vulgar. Say trousers," expostulated Clinton.

"It comes to the same thing, I fancy," said Harry, with a smile.

"If you should get short of clothing I'll give you a pair of my trousers," said Clinton generously.

"Thank you, Mr. Clinton."

Harry doubted, however, whether he should avail himself of the offer. Clinton's limbs were exceedingly attenuated and his trousers were an exact fit. Now, Harry had a sturdy pair of legs, and felt sure it would be impossible to get them into his companion's trousers. He contented himself, however, with thanking him.

The two parties remained apart, the original company

remaining with the captain, while four passengers and Jack Pendleton stayed with the mate. Capt. Hill showed a disposition to claim Jack, but Holdfast said, quietly: "I think, captain, Jack had better stay with me for the present, as he is company for Harry Vane."

The captain looked dissatisfied, but was too tired to remonstrate at that time. He went to his own encampment, and indulged in liberal potations of brandy, which had the effect of sending him to sleep.

That night a violent wind sprang up. It blew from the sea inland, and though it did not affect the shipwrecked parties or their encampment seriously, on account of their being screened by the intervening bluff, it had another effect which a day or two previous might have been disastrous. The ill-fated *Nantucket* was driven with such force against the reef that the strength of its hull was overtaxed. When the mate went to the edge of the bluff in the morning to take an observation, he was startled to find in place of the wreck a confused débris of timbers and fragments of the wreck. Kegs and chests which it had not been thought necessary to move had been thrown upon the reef, and the elements had done a work of destruction which the skill of man would have found it hard to repair.

As the mate was surveying the scene of ruin, Jack and Harry joined him.

"Look there, my lads!" said Holdfast. "That's the last of the poor old *Nantucket*. She will never float again."

They had known this before, but it was now impressed upon their minds forcibly, and a feeling of sadness came over the three.

"That settles it," said Harry, giving expression to a common feeling. "We are prisoners on the island now, and no mistake."

"When we leave here, it won't be on the *Nantucket*, anyway," said Jack.

"It is lucky this happened after we had brought our stock of provisions ashore," said the mate.

"Let us go down and see what these kegs and boxes contain," suggested Harry.

So the three descended to the reef, and began to examine the articles thrown ashore. For the most part they were of little value, though here and there were articles that might prove useful.

"Couldn't we make a raft out of the timbers of the old ship?" asked Jack.

"That is worth thinking of, though a raft would not do for a long voyage," said Holdfast.

"No, but we might be picked up."

"When the captain's party is awake it will be well for us to haul the loose timbers up to a place of safety."

"Here's Clinton's trunk," said Harry, bending over and recognizing the initials. "Here is the name, 'M. C., Brooklyn.' He will be overjoyed. Suppose we take it up between us."

No opposition being made by Mr. Holdfast, the boys took it between them, preceding the mate. They had just reached the summit of the bluff.

"Put down that trunk!" said a stern voice.

Looking up, the boys saw that the speaker was Capt. Hill.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE CAPTAIN INTERFERES

THE captain's face was of dull, brick red, and it was clear that he had already been drinking, early as it was. Naturally, the boys, on hearing his voice, put down the trunk in their surprise, but they maintained the position, one on each side of it. Of the two, Jack was the more impressed, having been one of the crew, and subject to

the captain's authority on shipboard. Harry, as a passenger, felt more independent. Indeed he was indignant, and ready to resist what he thought uncalled-for interference on the part of the captain.

"This is Mr. Clinton's trunk," he said. "We are going to carry it to him."

"Do you dare to dispute my authority?" roared the captain, his red face becoming still redder.

"I don't see what you have to do with the trunk," answered Harry boldly.

"This to me!" shrieked the captain, looking as if he were going to have a fit of apoplexy. "Do you know who I am?"

"You were the captain of the *Nantucket*," said Harry quietly.

The captain, notwithstanding his condition, noticed that Harry used the past tense.

"I am still the captain of the *Nantucket*, as I mean to show you," he retorted.

"Then, sir, you are captain of a wreck that has gone to pieces."

Capt. Hill upon this looked at the fragments of the unfortunate ship, and for the first time took in what had happened.

"It doesn't matter," said he, after a brief pause, "I am in command here, and"—here he interpolated an oath—"I don't allow any interference with my authority."

"You are not captain of Mr. Clinton's trunk," said Harry, in a spirited tone. "Jack, let us carry it along."

This was too much for the captain. With a look of fury on his face, he dashed toward Harry, and there is no doubt that our young hero was in serious danger. He paled slightly, for he knew he was no match for the tall, sinewy captain, and was half regretting his independence,

when he felt himself drawn forcibly to one side, and in his place stood the mate, sternly eying the infuriated captain.

"What do you want to do, Capt. Hill?" he asked.

"To crush that young viper!" shouted the captain, fiercely.

"You shall not harm a hair of his head!"

"Is this mutiny, Mr. Holdfast? Are you aware that you are speaking to your superior officer?"

"I have no superior officer here, Capt. Hill. You were captain on shipboard, but the ship has gone to pieces."

Capt. Hill seemed astounded by this answer.

"Do you dispute my authority, sir?" he ejaculated.

"I do."

"Zounds, sir; this is mutiny."

"Then make the most of it," said the mate, contemptuously.

"I will have you put in irons."

Mr. Holdfast smiled.

"I don't think any irons were brought ashore," he said.

"You have been drinking, Capt. Hill; or you would not make such a foolish threat."

By this time the captain's wrath had been diverted to the mate. He struck out with his right hand, intending to fell him to the ground, but, the mate swerving, he fell from the force of his abortive blow, and being under the influence of his morning potations could not immediately rise.

"Boys," said Mr. Holdfast, "you may take hold of the trunk again, and go on with it. Don't be afraid. If the captain makes any attempt to assault you, he will have me to deal with."

Harry and Jack did as directed. Jack, however, could not help feeling a little nervous, his old fear of the captain asserting itself. But Harry, confident in the protection of his good friend, the mate, was quite unconcerned.

Mr. Holdfast walked on beside them.

"The captain seems disposed to make trouble," he said. "He fancies that he is captain of this island, as he was chief officer of the *Nantucket*. I shall convince him of his mistake."

"I hope you won't get into any trouble on my account, Mr. Holdfast," said Harry, considerately.

"Thank you, my lad; but Tom Holdfast doesn't propose to let any man walk over him, even if it is his old skipper. Now that the ship is gone, Capt. Hill has no more authority here than I have."

As the captain fell, his head came in contact with a timber with such violence that, combined with his condition, he was forced to lie where he fell for over an hour.

As the boys emerged upon the bluff with the trunk, Clinton, who had just got up, recognized it, and ran up to them, his face beaming with delight.

"Oh, Mr. Vane!" he said, "have you really brought my trunk? You are awfully kind."

"Twenty-five cents apiece, please, Mr. Clinton," said Harry, smiling. "We don't work for nothing."

"Really, upon my word," said Clinton, thrusting his hands into his pockets, "I am afraid I haven't got my purse with me."

"That's a pity," said Harry, gravely, "for I wanted to call at a cheap furnishing goods store and buy a cheap necktie. Didn't you, Jack?"

"Oh, you're joking! Very good, upon my word. But I'm awfully obliged, don't you know?"

"You've had a narrow escape, Mr. Clinton. The captain met us, and forbade our bringing the trunk."

"Why?" asked Clinton, with eyes opened wide.

"I think he wanted it himself."

"But he couldn't wear my trousers," said Clinton, perplexed.

The mere suggestion of the burly captain incasing his legs in Clinton's dudelike garments sent both boys into a gale of laughter. Clinton surveyed them with a wondering smile. He didn't see the joke.

"You'd better put the trunk away where the captain won't see it, or there's no knowing what will happen," suggested Harry.

Then they had breakfast—a very plain meal, as might be supposed. Some of the sailors came over from the other camp, and one of them asked Mr. Holdfast if he had seen the captain.

"You will find him on the beach," answered the mate. "He has been carrying too much sail, I think," he added, dryly.

The sailor shrugged his shoulders.

"He wanted me and Jack Bowling to stand watch last night," he said. "He thought he was on the ship."

"Did you?"

"We just stood outside till he was asleep, and then we turned in."

"He'll never stand on the *Nantucket's* deck again."

"Why not?"

"In the blow last night the ship went to pieces."

The sailor hurried to the edge of the bluff, anxious to see for himself.

"That's so, Mr. Holdfast," he said soberly. "Shall we ever see America again, think you?"

"A brave man never depairs, Tom. We can rig up a raft or something. Meanwhile, we've got enough to eat for a couple of months. There's some satisfaction in that."

"And the captain saved his brandy. He's got enough to last him longer than that, if he don't get help."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean that there's some of the men as fond of spirits as he is. I expect he'll have help."

"You don't include yourself, I hope, Tom."

"No, Mr. Holdfast. My brother died of drink a year ago, and though up to that time I'd taken my glass of grog along with the rest of my shipmates, I swore off then, and I haven't drunk a glass since, and I don't mean to."

"Then you're a wise man. To my thinking, the brandy had better have been left aboard. Nothing but harm can come of it. I've had trouble with the captain already this morning on account of it, and I'm afraid this isn't the end."

After a while the captain picked himself up, and gazed moodily at the wreck, of which so little remained. Then, the events of the morning recurring to him, he frowned savagely, and, turning toward the bluff, he shook his fist angrily in the direction of the mate's encampment.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE ITALIAN SAILOR

For several days nothing of note occurred on the island. The captain exhibited an inclination for solitude. In the morning he would drink freely, and then wander off by himself, not returning till nightfall. It must be admitted that his absence was felt as a relief by both parties. When at the camp, he showed a disposition to domineer, as if he were still the tyrant of the quarter-deck.

Not having anything special on their hands, the shipwrecked party, still keeping apart in their two camps, amused themselves as best they could. Still, there were hours, and plenty of them, when all felt blue.

An idea came to Harry.

"Professor," he said, to his employer, "why can't we give one of our entertainments this evening?"

"Is there any hall that we can have?" asked the professor, smiling.

"I think it will be best to make an open-air entertainment, under the circumstances," returned Harry. "You see, some of the men are getting downhearted, when they think of the small prospect of seeing home, and it may cheer them up a little."

"It's a good idea, Harry," said the professor seriously. "By good luck, I have in my trunk"—the professor's trunk, like Clinton's, had come ashore—"some printed programs, requiring only the insertion of place and time, and you may post two of them up, one at each camp. Of course, you will assist."

"I will do my best."

Great was the surprise and interest when the sailors and passengers saw the printed posters attached to trees, Harry having attended to that duty in person, setting forth that a magical entertainment would that evening be given, admission free, beginning at seven o'clock. The hour was made early, because there was no means of lighting up.

"I say, Jack, that 'minds me of home," said Tim. "Never did I expect to see a bit of printin' nor a theayter ag'in."

"You're right, Tim. It looks good, it do."

Nothing was spoken of all day but the entertainment, and half an hour before the time the audience collected.

Fortunately, the professor had saved in his trunk all the implements of his profession, and the entertainment he gave, therefore, was quite as good as he was accustomed to furnish in the states. Some of the sailors had never seen any such exhibition, and they gazed with open-eyed wonder at the tricks and transformations, in which Harry ably seconded the "Magician of Madagascar." The ven-

triloquism, too, excited amazement, and some were half disposed to think that the professor was in league with unholy powers.

At the close the professor said:

“Our young friend, Harry Vane, will now oblige us all by a song.”

Harry stepped to the front and sang—he had not decided upon the song—“Home, Sweet Home!”

Before he had finished it tears came to the eyes of more than one of the sturdy sailors. The song intensified their yearning for home, and the doubt whether they would ever leave the island powerfully affected them. From the same cause Harry’s own voice became tremulous, and he saw that he had made a mistake.

“This won’t do, Harry,” said the professor, in a low voice. “Give them something jolly. Let us send them away in good spirits.”

Harry took the hint, and dashed into a lively song that soon called forth smiles to the faces but lately sad. He followed it up by another, and was greeted with uproarious applause.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” said the professor—“I beg pardon, gentlemen, for the ladies are unavoidably absent. This concludes our entertainment for this evening. Hoping that you have been pleased with our humble efforts, Harry and myself will now bid you good-night!”

“That professor’s a smart man!” was the opinion expressed by more than one, “and the lad sings like a martingale.”

“That isn’t the word, Jack. You’re all wrong.”

“Well, it’s some kind of bird. I disremember the exact name.”

All the party were present except one. Capt. Hill didn’t make his appearance till the meeting was breaking up. Then he came in sight, round the corner of the encampment. “What’s all this?” he demanded, suspiciously,

of a sailor. "What mischief have you been hatching up while I was away?"

"That poster will inform you, Capt. Hill," said the mate, pointing to the tree close by, to which it was attached. "The professor has been trying to cheer up the men a little."

The captain muttered something under his breath, and passed on.

Among the sailors was an Italian named Francesco. Probably he had another name, but no one knew what it was. In fact, a sailor's last name is very little used. He was a man of middle height, very swarthy, with bright, black eyes, not unpopular, for the most part, but with a violent temper. His chief fault was a love of strong drink. On board the *Nantucket* grog had been served to the crew; and with that he had been content. But at the time of the wreck no spirits had been saved but the captain's stock of brandy. Francesco felt this to be a great hardship. More than any other sailor he felt the need of his usual stimulant. It was very tantalizing to him to see the captain partaking of his private stock of brandy, while he was compelled to get along on water.

"The captain is too much a selfish," he said one day, to a fellow sailor. "He should share his brandy with the men."

Ben Brady, the sailor to whom he was speaking, shrugged his shoulders.

"Brandy is too good for the likes of us," he said.

"Who says that?" demanded the Italian, angrily.

"I say so, my hearty."

"Then the captain he not say so, eh?"

"I never heard him say so, but no doubt he thinks so."

"I no want brandy if I can get grog; but there is no grog."

"Then you will have to do without."

"I think I will try some of the captain's brandy when he is away," said Francesco, slyly.

"If you do, you will get into trouble. The captain will half murder you if he finds it out."

"He is not captain now—we are all equal—all comrades. We are not on ze sheep."

"Take my advice, Francesco, and leave the brandy alone."

Francesco did not reply, but he became more and more bent on his design. His mouth watered, if that is a correct expression, for the brandy which he saw the captain partake of every day. Why should one man monopolize all the good spirit, he asked himself, when he was suffering for a draught of it?

He watched the captain, and ascertained where he kept his secret store. Then he watched his opportunity to help himself to it. It was some time before he had an opportunity to do so unobserved, but at length the chance came.

The first draught brought light to his eyes, and made him smack his lips with enjoyment. It was so long since he had tasted the forbidden nectar that he drank again and again, forgetting that brandy had a strength which the more common liquors to which he was accustomed have not. Finally he found himself overcome by his potations, and sank upon the ground in a drunken stupor.

He was getting over the effects when, to his ill luck, the captain returned from his usual solitary ramble, and wended his way to the place where he had stored his brandy. Prone on the ground, in a state which no one could misunderstand, he saw Francesco.

"He has been at my brandy!" Capt. Hill said to himself, with flaming eyes. "The fool shall pay dearly for his temerity."

He advanced hastily to the prostrate man, and administered a severe kick, which at once aroused the half-stupefied man.

Francesco looked up with alarm, for the captain was a much larger and stronger man than himself.

"Pardon, signor captain," he entreated.

"You have been drinking my brandy, you beast," said Capt. Hill, furiously.

"Pardon me; indeed, I could not help it, I was so thirsty."

"I pardon you?" roared the captain. "I'll give you a lesson you will never forget."

I draw a veil over the brutal treatment poor Francesco received. When it was over he crawled away, beaten and humiliated, but in his eye there was a dangerous light that boded no good to the captain.

CHAPTER XXXIV

MR. CLINTON'S TERRIBLE ADVENTURE

MONTGOMERY CLINTON, having, like most of his companions, very little to occupy his mind, got into the habit of taking long walks about the island. He had got over his fear of a possible encounter with savages, having made up his mind that the island was uninhabited save by the shipwrecked sailors and passengers of the *Nantucket*. Though he was not likely to meet anyone, habit was strong upon him, and he attired himself as carefully for these expeditions as if he were about to visit Prospect Park on a Sunday afternoon, or take a stroll down Fulton avenue, in his native Brooklyn.

Mr. Clinton was not fond of solitude. He felt that it was a pity no one was privileged to see him in all the splendor of his apparel. But he could always admire himself. By some strange oversight, not a mirror—not even a handglass—had been brought on shore, and his only chance to survey himself was to gaze into the depths

of some pellucid pool, and admire the slender figure and attenuated limbs, which qualified him for his crowning distinction as a modern dude.

About two miles from the camp, not far from the shore, was a small pond, or pool, which he used for a mirror. His reason for going alone was, that he could not have indulged otherwise, without ridicule, in his favorite amusement of admiring his own form and figure.

One warm day he fell asleep a few rods from the pond. His walk, together with the heat, had made him drowsy, and, pillowing his head on a clump of earth, he enjoyed a refreshing slumber. At length he had a dream that terrified him. It seemed to him that he was in the region beyond the Missouri, in the heart of the forests, surrounded by a pack of American Indians, who, armed with bows and spears, were executing a war dance about him, preparatory to inflicting cruel tortures upon him. Poor Clinton's brow was covered with beads of cold perspiration in spite of the heat, and his mental agitation was such that the chains of slumber were loosened, and he woke up. But his awakening did not release him from the thralldom of terror. As from his lowly pillow he looked upward, he saw a brown face scanning him with curiosity. It was only one of half a dozen Polynesian savages, scantily clothed, as is the custom of their race, who were gathered in a circle about him.

Clinton at first thought that it was only a continuation of his dream, but a hurried glance at the familiar surroundings satisfied him that he was broad awake, and that these were creatures of real flesh and blood.

The poor fellow's heart sank within him. They might be cannibals, he thought, about to kill him to satisfy their degraded appetite. He was neither brave nor bold, but even if he had been, he was but one against six. What could he do? If only he could propitiate them by gentle and conciliatory speech, he might yet save his life.

He gathered himself up, and, with blanched face and troubled look, returned the steadfast gaze of the strangers. When he rose, they moved back a step, and surveyed him doubtfully, as if uncertain of his intentions.

"Gentlemen," said Clinton, in a tremulous tone, "I hope you will excuse me for intruding upon your domains. 'Pon my word, I didn't know you lived here. I'm awfully sorry, don't you know."

The savages looked at each other in bewilderment. They heard the words, but they were as unintelligible to them as Greek would have been to Clinton. The object before them evidently aroused their curiosity. The thin figure and attenuated limbs of the white stranger, with the striped trousers, fitting closely to the skin, which covered them, seemed to them very singular. They were evidently not quite clear in mind whether Clinton was not curiously tattooed, for one of them bent down and passed his brown hands over the trousers. Then he turned, and spoke in a soft gibberish to his companions, as if to inform them of the discovery he had made.

Poor Clinton trembled when this examination was going on. He did not know what it portended. Then another of the savages came forward and gratified his curiosity in the same way. Then he put his hand upon his own leg, and spoke to the others, no doubt calling attention to the difference between them.

"They are admiring my trousers," thought Clinton, and, in spite of his fears, he felt a certain gratification in feeling that he was once more appreciated, though it were only by these untutored savages.

But great was his dismay when they made signs for him to remove his trousers, in order that they might the better form an opinion as to this unknown covering.

"I really hope you'll excuse me, gentlemen," he said, with trepidation. "I really couldn't spare them, don't you know."

Of course they did not understand him, but they saw that he was making objections, and one of them made a threatening gesture that brought Clinton to terms.

In anguish of heart, he proceeded to divest himself of his pantaloons. One of the savages took them, and they were passed from one to another, and attentively examined.

"I hope they'll give them back to me," thought Clinton anxiously.

Finally one of the party undertook to draw them over his own limbs, which were quite double the size of the unhappy dude's.

"You'll tear them, my good friend," he said, in alarm. "They are much too small for you, don't you know."

Naturally the savage took no notice of the remonstrance, and proceeded with his experiment. The natural result followed. In attempting to thrust his sturdy limbs into the dudelike legs, the trousers burst at the side, and after a hard struggle the gentleman from the South Seas was obliged to give it up.

He shook his head with an expression of disgust, and threw the trousers upon the ground.

Clinton picked them up, and with mental anguish surveyed the irreparable damage which had been done to his choicest trousers, the pride of his wardrobe. He put them on, but they hung limp and tattered to his limbs. Their glory and beauty had departed.

"What will they do next?" the unhappy Clinton asked himself.

He did not need to wait long for an answer to his question.

The first savage espied his hat, a choice one bought from Knox, and, unceremoniously snatching it from his head, put it on his own.

His companions seemed amused, and laughed in their

way at the perpetrator of this high-handed outrage, as he strutted about with Mr. Clinton's fashionable hat.

"Please give it back to me, most noble savage!" pleaded Clinton, in piteous accents of genuine alarm, for although he had recovered from the wreck six pairs of trousers, he had but one hat, and if that were lost, he would be obliged to go about without any head covering.

His first fears had departed. The strange visitors seemed too gentle to be cannibals. But even were it otherwise, the Brooklyn dude would have made very poor pickings for any cannibal with a hearty appetite. Montgomery Clinton, though of average height, weighed but one hundred and two pounds when completely dressed, and would have required a long time to fatten.

The poor fellow's trials, however, were near an end. All at once a party of sailors burst out of a leafy covert, and began to run to the spot. Immediately the savages took to their heels and ran swiftly to the sea, where a couple of canoes were awaiting them. The sailors joined in the pursuit, but did not succeed in overtaking them. Into the canoe they jumped, and began to paddle away. But alas! Clinton's hat went with them. The new wearer of the hat forgot to return it, and presented a curious spectacle as he sat in the canoe in his scant attire with a fashionable Broadway hat on his head.

"What did they do to you, Mr. Clinton?" asked a sailor.

"See here!" said Clinton, pointing mournfully to his ruined trousers.

But the sailors only laughed, and made light of what to Clinton was a serious trouble.

"And they've got my hat, too!" said Clinton, sadly.

"Take mine, my hearty!" said a sailor, clapping his own tarpaulin on Clinton's head. "I don't need any, not bein' delicate, or afraid of bein' tanned."

Clinton was about to decline, but finally accepted, feel-

ing a headache coming on from the powerful rays of the sun, and henceforth his dudelike appearance was marred by the incongruity between the hat and the rest of his attire.

CHAPTER XXXV

A TRAGICAL END

WHILE Clinton was undergoing persecution from the unappreciative natives, a different and much more tragical scene was being enacted at a different part of the island.

Capt. Hill, from his unfortunate temperament, was on cordial terms with none of his shipwrecked companions. The sailors, indeed, yielded him a certain outward respect on account of the position he had held on shipboard, but when he tried to exercise an equal authority on the island they were stubborn, and declined to obey him. Now, the captain was inclined to be a despot, and naturally liked to domineer. This disposition on the part of his former subordinates annoyed him exceedingly, yet he was obliged to submit to it. Had he been pleasant and reasonable, like the mate, he would have found no difficulty in maintaining his ascendancy, and the sailors would have yielded him a willing obedience. He would have found pleasure also in the society of the passengers. As it was, all avoided him, and he was forced to depend upon his own thoughts, not altogether agreeable, for companionship.

Usually soon after breakfast he set out on a long and aimless walk, which occupied him all day. Where he went, or how he occupied himself, none knew, for no one took the trouble to follow him, with one exception.

If Capt. Hill had been a prudent man, he would have noticed that while no one was friendly to him, one man among the small company hated him. This was Francesco, the Italian sailor, whom he had brutally beaten

when he discovered him in the act of purloining his brandy. Others, however, noticed the glances of hatred with which the swarthy-faced Italian regarded his former commander. One day Mr. Holdfast thought it right to call it to the attention of the captain.

"Capt. Hill," he said, "I think it only right to tell you that there is a man in your camp who may do you a mischief."

"What do you mean?" demanded the captain, haughtily, drawing himself up.

"I mean that Francesco, the Italian sailor, evidently hates you, and is quite capable of doing you harm."

"That—pygmy!" said the captain, disdainfully, "why, he is only a boy in stature, and I could manage half a dozen like him."

"True, if you had fair warning; but he is treacherous—he will not take you at advantage."

Capt. Hill laughed scornfully.

"I am not an old man, Mr. Holdfast," he said, "to be frightened at trifles. The fellow is welcome to hate me. I would as soon apprehend danger from a five-pound puppy."

"No enemy is unworthy of notice," said the mate, sententiously.

Capt. Hill made a gesture of impatience, and walked away.

Holdfast shook his head in disapproval.

"Heaven grant his confidence be not misplaced!" he said to himself. "I am no coward, but if Francesco looked after me with such murderous glances as those with which he regards the captain, I should feel nervous and try to placate him."

No one is in so much danger as the man who is over-confident. Capt. Hill did not allow the warning he had received to make him more prudent. Indeed, it did harm, for he picked out Francesco as a fit subject for further

ill treatment, and on more than one occasion kicked and cuffed him. The Italian made no open resistance, but slunk away, while the captain followed him with a derisive smile.

“So that is the man I am to be afraid of, according to Holdfast,” he muttered. “Well, I propose to make it unpleasant for him.”

Presently Francesco began to absent himself. Where he went no one knew or cared, but he, too, would be away all day. His small, black eyes glowed with smoldering fires of hatred whenever he looked at the captain, but his looks were always furtive, and so for the most part escaped observation.

One day Capt. Hill stood in contemplation on the edge of a precipitous bluff, looking seaward. His hands were folded, and he looked thoughtful. His back was turned, so he could not, therefore, see a figure stealthily approaching, the face distorted by murderous hate, the hand holding a long, slender knife. Fate was approaching him in the person of a deadly enemy. He did not know that day by day Francesco had dogged his steps, watching for the opportunity which at last had come.

So stealthy was the pace, and so silent the approach of the foe, that the captain believed himself wholly alone till he felt a sharp lunge, as the stiletto entered his back between his shoulders. He staggered, but turned suddenly, all his senses now on the alert, and discovered who had assailed him.

“Ha! it is you!” he exclaimed, wrathfully, seizing the Italian by the throat. “Dog, what would you do?”

“Kill you!” hissed the Italian, and with the remnant of his strength he thrust the knife farther into his enemy’s body.

The captain turned white, and he staggered, still standing on the brink of the precipice.

Perceiving it, and not thinking of his own danger, Fran-

cesco gave him a push, and losing his balance the captain fell over the edge, a distance of sixty feet, upon the jagged rocks beneath. But not alone! Still retaining his fierce clutch upon the Italian's throat, the murderer, too, fell with him, and both were stretched in an instant, mangled and lifeless, at the bottom of the precipice. Whether either had a gleam of consciousness after the terrible fall could not be told. They passed out of life together.

When night came, and neither returned, it was thought singular, but the night was dark and they were unprovided with lanterns, so that the search was postponed till morning. It was only after a search of several hours that the two were found, the captain even in death retaining his hold upon his swarthy foe, while the faces of both showed them to have been under the influence of passion.

"He would have been alive to-day if he had heeded my warning!" said the mate. "I told him that no enemy was unworthy of notice."

There was little mourning for either. Francesco had never been a favorite with the other sailors, though they sympathized with him against the captain, whose brutal treatment was without adequate excuse.

CHAPTER XXXVI

CONCLUSION

AFTER the captain's death two distinct camps were still maintained, but the most cordial relations existed between them. At the suggestion of the mate, an inventory was made of the stock of provisions, and to each camp was assigned an amount proportioned to the number of men which it contained.

There was no immediate prospect of want. Still, the more prudent regarded with anxiety the steady diminution of the stocks remaining, and an attempt was made to eke them out by fresh fish caught off the island. But the inevitable day was only postponed. At length only a week's provisions remained. The condition was becoming serious.

"What shall we do?" was the question put to Mr. Holdfast, who was now looked upon by all as their leader and chief.

Upon this the mate called a general meeting of all upon the island, sailors and passengers alike.

"My friends," he said, "it is useless to conceal our situation. We are nearly out of provisions, and though we may manage to subsist upon the fish we catch, and other esculents native to this spot, it will be a daily fight against starvation. I have been asked what we are to do. I prefer rather to call for suggestions from you."

"How far is the nearest land, in your opinion, Mr. Holdfast?" asked Mr. Stubbs.

"Probably it is at least a thousand miles to the continent, meaning the continent of Asia. No doubt there are islands much nearer."

"We are on an island now, and probably we should not improve our condition by seeking another."

"We might make it worse if we reached an island inhabited by warlike savages. Upon that point I can give you no information. This is my first voyage to this part of the world."

"In my view there are two courses open to us," said Mr. Stubbs, finding that no one else appeared to have anything to propose. "We must remain here and eat up the rest of our provisions, but there seems very little chance of our attracting the attention of any passing vessel. We appear to be out of the ordinary course. Of course, it is possible that some ship may have passed the

island without attracting our notice. What is your opinion, Mr. Holdfast?"

"The flag of the *Nantucket*, as you all know, has floated night and day from a pole erected on a high bluff," said the mate. "The chances are that if any vessel had come sufficiently near it would have attracted attention, and led to a boat being lowered, and an exploring party sent thither."

"Precisely. It looks, therefore, as if we were out of the general course of vessels."

Here the boatswain, Harrison, spoke up.

"I agree with Mr. Stubbs," said he, "and I say there's only one thing to do."

"Go on, sir," said Stubbs.

"While we've got any provisions left," continued the boatswain, "let us take the boats, and put out to sea. We can go where the ships are, and then we'll have some chance. They'll never find us here, leastways, such is my opinion."

There was a murmur of assent from the sailors, who clearly agreed with the boatswain.

"Ay, ay; let us take to the boats!" they said.

"Mr. Harrison expresses my sentiments," said Stubbs, with a bow. "His proposal is identical with the one I intended to make."

"My friends," said the mate, "you have heard the proposal made by the boatswain, and indorsed by Mr. Stubbs. All who are in favor of it will please raise their right hand."

All voted in the affirmative with the exception of Montgomery Clinton.

"Don't you think the plan a good one, Mr. Clinton?" asked Harry.

"It's so horrid being out in a small boat, don't you know," responded Clinton. "It's much nicer on the island."

“But it would not be very nice staying here all our lives,” said Harry. “Still, we can leave you here, if you prefer it.”

“Oh, no!” said Clinton, hastily. “I might meet some of those horrid natives, don’t you know. I’ll go if the rest go.”

“My friends,” said Mr. Holdfast, “it seems to be the unanimous sentiment that we leave the island, and sail out far enough to be in the course of passing vessels. I concur in the expediency of this step, and am ready to command one of the boats.”

“Mr. Clinton will command the other,” said Harry.

There was a general laugh, which reassured poor Clinton, who had taken Harry’s proposal in earnest, and was about to excuse himself, in alarm.

“Mr. Harrison will command the other,” continued the mate.

“When shall we start?” asked a passenger.

“The sooner the better! To-morrow morning, if it is pleasant.”

This decision pleased all. Something was to be done, and hope was rekindled in the breasts of all. Heretofore they had been living on, without hope or prospect of release. Now they were to set out boldly, and though there was the possibility of failure, there was also a chance of deliverance.

No sooner was the decision made than all hands went to work to prepare for embarking. Mr. Clinton, even, volunteered his assistance, but he proved so unhandy, and got so mixed in attempting to follow directions, that Mr. Holdfast gravely excused him from personal labor, and asked him to superintend the others. This gave Mr. Clinton an idea that he was of great service, although his orders received no attention. He was very much disturbed because the mate would not agree to carry his trunk in the boat, but restricted him to the clothes he had on.

"What will become of my trousers?" he asked, pathetically.

"The next party of natives landing on the island will probably find them very convenient," said the matè, with a twinkle in his eye.

"I couldn't bear to think of their wearing them," responded Clinton, mournfully. "May I take one pair under my arm?"

This favor was finally accorded to the young man, and his grief was somewhat mitigated.

In the apportionment of passengers, Mr. Holdfast, who commanded the long boat, retained Harry, the professor and Clinton. Six sailors, including Jack Pendleton, made up the complement.

"I am glad you are going to be with us, Jack," said Harry, joyfully. "I shouldn't like to be separated from you."

"Nor I from you, Harry," returned Jack, with a look of affection, for he had grown very much attached to our hero.

"I don't know what fate is in store for us," continued Harry, "but, at any rate, we shall be together."

At eight o'clock the next morning they started. As the island faded in the distance, all looked back thoughtfully at their sometime home.

"Shall we ever see it again, Jack, I wonder?" said Harry.

"I hope not," answered Jack, "except from the deck of a good ship."

"I have passed some happy days there. It isn't so bad a place, after all."

"But I like a ship's deck better."

"Because you are fond of the sea. You will be a captain sometime, Jack."

"I hope so," answered the young sailor, with glowing face.

"How would you like to be sailor, Mr. Clinton?" asked Harry, mischievously.

"It is a horrid business," said Clinton, shuddering. "The sea is very nasty. Oh!"

"What's the matter?"

"Some nasty sea water was splashed on my trousers. You sailor men, please row more carefully."

The sailors only laughed, and five minutes later poor Clinton suffered again in the same way, whether by accident or design I am not sure.

Three days the two boats floated about on the bosom of the ocean—three days and nights of anxiety, during which no sail was visible. But at length a ship was sighted.

"All of you wave your handkerchiefs!" said the mate. "In one way or another we must try to attract attention."

"Wave your trousers, Clinton," said Harry.

"I can't, don't you know," said Clinton, bewildered.

Not to protract the reader's suspense, let me say that by great good fortune the mate of the approaching ship, in sweeping the ocean with his glass, caught sight of the two boats, and changed the course of the vessel so as to fall in with them.

"Who are you?" he hailed.

"Shipwrecked sailors and passengers of the ship *Nantucket*," was the answer of Mr. Holdfast.

They were taken on board, and discovered that the vessel was the *Phocis*, from New York, bound for Melbourne.

"We shall reach our destination, after all, then, professor," said Harry, "and you will be able to give your entertainments as you proposed."

Prof. Hemenway shook his head.

"I shall take the first steamer home," he said. "My wife will be anxious about me, and even now is in doubt whether I am alive or dead. You can return with me if you like."

"No," answered Harry. "After the trouble I have had

in getting to Australia, I mean to stay long enough to see what sort of a country it is. I think I can make a living in one way or another, and if I can't, I will send to America for the money I have there."

In due time they reached Melbourne, without further mischance. Harry induced Jack to remain with him, but Mr. Clinton, with a new stock of trousers, purchased in Melbourne, returned to America on the same steamer with the professor. What befell the two boys, in whom I hope my readers have become interested, will be told in a new story, entitled: "In a New World; or, Harry Vane in Australia."

THE END.

The Famous Alger Stories for Boys

Give your boy all he wants of the ALGER BOOKS. They are always unusually interesting, and in a quiet way convey lessons of pluck, perseverance, and manly independence.

THIS IS ONE VOLUME OF THE SERIES

The following books are ready for delivery:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Strong and Steady | 13. Slow and Sure |
| 2. Strive and Succeed | 14. Julius the Street Boy |
| 3. Try and Trust | 15. Tom the Bootblack |
| 4. Bound to Rise | 16. Struggling Upward |
| 5. Risen From the Ranks | 17. Facing the World |
| 6. Herbert Carter's Legacy | 18. The Cash Boy |
| 7. Brave and Bold | 19. Making His Way |
| 8. Jack's Ward | 20. Tony the Tramp |
| 9. Shifting for Himself | 21. Joe's Luck |
| 10. Wait and Hope | 22. Do and Dare |
| 11. Paul the Peddler | 23. Only an Irish Boy |
| 12. Phil the Fiddler | 24. Sink or Swim |

The ALGER BOOKS have held the foremost place in juvenile fiction for forty years, and they are read to-day with the same avidity as they were a generation ago—and they will continue to be read with equal interest so long as boys are boys.

There are several editions of these stories, but none of them are equal to this new edition from new plates for general excellence, at the lowest price for which a well-made cloth bound book has ever been offered by any publisher.

THE NEW YORK BOOK COMPANY

147 FOURTH AVENUE - - - - - NEW YORK, N. Y.





